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THE PROBLEM OF CHRISTIANITY

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE LOWELL INSTITUTE IN BOSTON, AND AT MANCHESTER COLLEGE, OXFORD

BY

JOSIAH ROYCE
D.Sc. (University of Oxford)
PROFESSOR OF THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY IN HARVARD UNIVERSITY

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VOLUME I

THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF LIFE

New York
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1914

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THE REAL WORLD AND THE CHRISTIAN IDEAS

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LECTURE IX

THE COMMUNITY AND THE TIME-PROCESS

THE present situation of the Philosophy of Religion is dominated by motives and tendencies which are at once inspiring and confusing. It is the task of a student of this branch of philosophy to do whatever he can towards clarifying our outlook. Some of our recent leaders of opinion have turned our attention to new aspects of human experience, and have enriched philosophy with a wealth of fascinating intuitions. These contributions to the philosophy of our time have obvious bearings upon the interests of religion. If religion depended solely upon intuition and upon novelty, our age would already have proved its right to be regarded as a period of great advances in religious insight.

In fact, however, religion is concerned, not merely with our experience, but also with our will. The true lover of religion needs a conscience, as well as a joy in living — a

coherent plan of action as well as a vital impulse. Now, in the present phase of the philosophy of religion, the religious aspect of the conscience is, as I believe, too seldom made a central object of inquiry. The interests of a coherent plan of life are too much neglected. I believe that both our ethical and our distinctly religious concerns tend to suffer in consequence of these tendencies of recent thought to which I thus allude. I believe that much can be done to profit by the novelties and by the intuitions of our day, without losing ourselves in the wilderness of caprices into which recent discussion has invited us to make the future home of our philosophy.

I

Because I view the problems of the philosophy of religion in this general way, I have undertaken, in the foregoing lectures, a study of the problem of Christianity which has been intended to accomplish three distinct, but closely connected tasks: —

First, in a fashion that has shown, as I hope, some genuine sympathy with the tendencies now prevalent, both in the whole field of philosophy, and, in particular, in the study of religion, I have tried to interpret some of the more obviously human and practical aspects of the religious beliefs of our fathers. In other words, I have approached the problem of Christianity from the side, not of metaphysics and of traditional dogmas, but of religious life and of human experience.

Secondly, even in using this mode of approach, I have laid stress upon the fact that Christianity — viewed as a doctrine of life — is not merely a religion of experience and of sentiment, but also a religion whose main stress is laid upon the unity and the coherence of the common experience of the faithful, and upon the judgment which a calm and far-seeing conscience passes upon the values of life. The freedom of spirit to which Christianity, in the course of its centuries of teaching, has trained the civilizations which it

has influenced, has been the freedom which loves both a wide outlook and a well-knit plan of action. In brief, I have insisted that Christianity, whatever its metaphysical basis may be, and however rich may be the wealth of intuitions which it has opened to its followers, has all the seriousness of purpose, and all the strenuousness of will, which make it indeed a religion of loyalty.

Thirdly, I have, from the outset, said that our view of the mission and the truth of the Christian doctrine of life would not be complete without a study of the metaphysical basis of the Christian ideas.

In the last two lectures we have considered how the modern mind stands related to the human interests which the Christian doctrine of life expresses. Our fathers, however, held Christianity to be, not merely a plan for the salvation of man, but a revelation concerning the origin and fate of the whole cosmos. From this point onwards, in our study, we must face anew the problem which the old faith regarded as solved. We, too, must take

account of the universe. We must consider what is the consistent position for the modern mind to accept when the inquiry arises: Has the Christian doctrine of life a more than human meaning and foundation? Does this doctrine express a truth, not only about man, but about the whole world, and about God?

II

The modern man has long since learned not to confine himself to a geocentric view of the universe, nor to an anthropocentric view of the affairs of this planet of ours. For minds trained as ours now are, it has become inevitable to imagine how human concerns would seem to us if we heard of them from afar, as dwellers in other solar or stellar systems might be supposed to hear of them. We have been taught to remember that at some time, — a time not nearly so distant from us in the future as the Miocene division of the Tertiary period is now distant from us in the past, man will probably be as extinct as is now the sabre-toothed tiger. But such

considerations as these arouse further queries about Christian doctrine — queries which no modern mind can wholly ignore. Let all be admitted which we urged at the last time regarding the close relation of the Christian doctrine of life to the deepest needs of humanity. Then this will indeed show that Christianity, viewed simply *as* such a doctrine of life, need not fear social changes, so long as civilized man endures; and will remain as a spiritual guide of future generations, however vast the revolutions to which they may be subject, so long as the future generations view life largely and seriously.

But such considerations will not meet all the legitimate questions of a philosophy of religion. For religion, although it need not depend for its appeal to the human heart upon solving the problems of the cosmos, inevitably leads to a constantly renewed interest in those problems. Let it be granted that the salvation of mankind indeed requires some form of religion whose essential ideas are in harmony with the Christian ideas which we

have examined; still, that fact will not quite supply an answer to our natural inquiries, if indeed mankind is destined simply to fail, — as the sabre-toothed tiger failed. And if mankind, in the vast cosmos, is as much alone amongst the beings that people the universe as the earth seems to be alone amongst the countless worlds, — what shall it profit us if we seem to be saving our own souls for a time, but actually remain, after all, what we were before, — utterly insignificant incidents in a world-process that neither needs men nor heeds them?

Traditional theology could long ignore such considerations, because it could centre all the universe about the earth and man. But the modern man must think of his kind as thus really related to an immeasurably vast cosmic process, at whose centre our planet does not stand, and in whose ages our brief human lives play a part as transient, relatively speaking, as is, for our own eyes, the flickering of the northern lights.

The task to which we must now devote

ourselves is thus determined, for our age, and for the modern man, by the enlarged perspective in which we have to view human history. Our doctrine of life is not so readily to be connected with our picture of the universe as would be the case if we still lived under the heavenly spheres of an ancient cosmology. Yet we shall find that the difference which is here in question will not prove to be so great in its meaning as the quantitative differences between the ancient and modern world seem, at first, to imply. Our fathers also faced the problem of the infinity of the universe, much as they often tried to ignore or to minimize that problem. And, in the spiritual world, mere quantity, however vast, is not the hardest of obstacles to overcome.

III

In any case, however, the part of our undertaking upon which we thus enter, corresponds to those chapters of traditional theology which dealt with the existence and nature of God,

and with God's relation to the world, and with the origin and destiny of the human individual. Our own attempt to study these well-worn problems begins with one, and perhaps with only one, advantage over the best-known traditional modes of expounding a philosophical theology. We, namely, set out under the guidance of our foregoing study of the Christian ideas. Central among these ideas is that of the Universal Community. For us, then, theology, if we are to define any theology at all, must depend upon the metaphysical interpretation and foundation of the community. If that ideal of one beloved and united community of all mankind whose religious value we have defended, has a basis, not merely in the transient interests of us mortals, but also in whatever is largest and most lasting in the universe, then indeed the doctrine of the community will prove to be a doctrine about the being and nature and manifestation of God; and our estimate of the relation of the modern mind to the spirit of a Christian creed will be altered and com-

pleted accordingly. This one doctrine will indeed not suffice to make us literal followers of tradition; but it will bring us into a sympathy with some of the most essential features of the Christian view of the divine being.

IV

What interests are at stake when this aspect of the problems of theology is emphasized, I can best remind you by recalling the fact which we mentioned in comparing Buddhism and Christianity in a former lecture. The most characteristic feature by which the Christian doctrine of life stands contrasted with its greatest religious rival, we found to be the one summarized in the words of the creed: "I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints." In our former lecture, when we commented upon these words, we laid no stress upon the special traditions of the historical Church. We considered only the universally human significance of the ideal which has always constituted the vital principle of the

historical Church, — far away as the adequate embodiment of that ideal in any visible human institution still seems to be. At the present stage of our inquiry, — since we are, of necessity, entering for the time the world of metaphysical abstractions, we have also to abstract from still another aspect of the meaning which the words of the creed intend to convey. For neither the historical Church, nor the distinctively human ideal which it expresses, shall be, in these metaphysical lectures, at the centre of our attention. We are here to ask: For what truth, if any, regarding the whole nature of things, does that article of the creed stand? Our answer must be found, if at all, in some metaphysical theory of the community and of its relation, if such relation it possesses, to the divine being. In other words, the central problem in our present attempt at a theology must be that problem which traditional Christian theology has so strangely neglected, — the problem of what the religious consciousness has called the Holy Spirit.

V

The philosophy of religion, in dealing with the problem of Christianity, has often elaborately expounded and criticised the arguments for the existence of God. Such philosophical arguments have in general to do with the concept of the Deity viewed quite apart from the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. In other cases, and for obvious historical reasons, the philosophy of religion has had much to say about the doctrine of the Logos. This doctrine, when treated as a part of Christian theology, is usually taken to be the theory of the second person of the Trinity. But the traditional doctrine of the Holy Spirit, neglected by the early theologians of the Church, even when the creeds were still in the formative period of their existence, has remained until this day in the background of inquiry, both for the theologians and for the philosophers. A favorite target for hostile, although often inarticulate, criticism on the part of the opponents of tradition, and a frequent object

of reverential, but confessedly problematic and often very vague, exposition on the part of the defenders of the faith, — the article of the creed regarding the Holy Spirit is, I believe, the one matter about which most who discuss the problem of Christianity have least to say in the way of definite theory.

Yet, if I am right, — this is, in many respects, the really distinctive and therefore the capital article of the Christian creed, so far as that creed suggests a theory of the divine nature. This article, then, should be understood, if the spirit of Christianity, in its most human and vital of features, is to be understood at all. And this article should be philosophically expounded and defended, if any distinctively Christian article of the creed is to find a foundation in a rationally defensible metaphysical theory of the universe.

Apart from the doctrine of the ideal community, and of the divine Spirit as constituting the unity and the life of this community,

Theism can be, as for many centuries it has been, defined and defended. But such theism, which "knows not so much as whether there is any Holy Ghost," is not distinctively Christian in its meaning. And the Logos-doctrine, except when viewed in unity with the doctrine of the Spirit, is indeed what some of its recent hostile critics (such as Harnack) have taken it to be, — a thesis of Greek philosophy, and not a characteristically Christian opinion. The Logos-doctrine of the Fourth Gospel, as we earlier saw, is indeed no mere following of Greek metaphysics; for the Fourth Gospel identifies the Logos with the spirit of the community. Here, then, in this doctrine of the spirit, lies the really central idea of any distinctively Christian metaphysic.

To approach the problems of the philosophy of religion from the side of the metaphysical basis of the idea of the community is therefore, I believe, to undertake a task as momentous as it is neglected.

VI

Moreover, as we shall soon find, this mode of beginning the metaphysical part of our task promises to relieve us, for the time, from the need of using some terms and of repeating some discussions, which recent controversy may well have made wearisome to many of us. The altogether too abstractly stated contrast between Monism and Pluralism — a contrast which fills so large a place in the polemical metaphysical writings of the day, does not force itself to the front, in our minds and in our words, when we set out to inquire into the real basis of the idea of the community. For a community immediately presents itself to our minds both as one and as many; and unless it is both one and many, it is no community at all. This fact does not, by itself, solve the problem of the One and the Many. But it serves to remind us how untrue to life is the way in which that problem is frequently stated.

In fact, as I believe, the idea of the com-

munity, suggested to us by the problems of human social life, but easily capable of a generalization which possesses universal importance, gives us one of our very best indications of the way in which the problem of the One and the Many is to be solved, and of the level of mental life upon which the solution is actually accomplished.

So much may serve as a general indication of the nature of our undertaking. Let me next attempt to define the problem of the community more precisely.

VII

Motives which are as familiar as they are hard to analyze have convinced us all, before we begin to philosophize, that our human world contains a variety of individually distinct minds or selves, and that some, for us decisively authoritative, principle of individuation, keeps these selves apart, and forbids us to regard their various lives merely as incidents, or as undivided phases of a common life. This conviction — the stubborn plural-

ism of our present and highly cultivated social consciousness — tends indeed, under criticism, to be subject to various doubts and modifications, — the more so as, in case we are once challenged to explain who we are, none of us find it easy to define the precise boundaries of the individual self, or to tell wherein it differs from the rest of the world, and, in particular, from the selves of other men.

But to all such doubts our social common sense replies by insisting upon three groups of facts. These facts combine to show that the individual human selves are sundered from one another by gaps which, as it would seem, are in some sense impassable.

First, in this connection, our common sense insists upon the empirical sundering of the feelings, — that is, of the immediate experiences of various human individuals. One man does not feel, and, speaking in terms of direct experience, cannot feel, the physical pains of another man. Sympathy may try its best to bridge the gulf thus established by nature. Love may counsel me to view the

pangs of my fellow *as if they were* my own. But, as a fact, my sensory nerves do not end in my fellow's skin, but in mine. And the physical sundering of the organisms corresponds to a persistent sundering of our streams of immediate feeling. Even the most immediate and impressive forms of sympathy with the physical pangs of another human being only serve the more to illustrate how our various conscious lives are thus kept apart by gulfs which we cannot cross. When a pitiful man shrinks, or feels faint, or is otherwise overcome with emotion, at what is called "the sight" of another's suffering, — how unlike are the sufferings of the shrinking or terrified or overwhelmed spectator, and the pangs of the one with whom he is said to sympathize. As a fact, the sympathizer does not feel the sufferer's pain. What he feels is his own emotional reverberation at the sight of its symptoms. That is, in general, something very different, both in quality and in intensity, from what the injured man feels.

We appear, then, to be individuated by the

diversity and the separateness of our streams of immediate feeling. My toothache cannot directly become an item in my neighbor's mind. Facts of this sort form the first group of evidences upon which common sense depends for its pluralistic view of the world of human selves.

The facts of the second group are closely allied to the former, but lie upon another level of individual life, — namely, upon the level of our more organized ideas.

"One man," so says our social common sense, "can only indirectly discover the intentions, the thoughts, the ideas, of another man." Direct telepathy, if it ever occurs at all, is a rare and, in most of our practical relations, a wholly negligible fact. By nature, every man's plans, intents, opinions, and range of personal experience are secrets, except in so far as his physical organism indirectly reveals them. His fellows can learn these secrets only through his expressive movements. Control your expression, keep silence, avoid the unguarded look and the telltale gesture; and then nobody can dis-

cover what is in your mind. No man can directly read the hearts of his fellows. This seems, for our common sense, to be one of the deepest-seated laws of our social experience. It is often expressed as if it were not merely an empirical law, but a logical necessity. How could I possibly possess or share or become conscious of the thoughts and purposes of another mind, unless I were myself identical with that mind? So says our ordinary common sense. The very supposition that I could be conscious of a thought or of an intent which was all the while actually present to the consciousness of another individual man, is often regarded as a supposition not only contrary to fact, but also contrary to reason. Such a supposition, it is often said, would involve a direct self-contradiction.

Otherwise expressed, the facts of this second group, and the principles which they exemplify, are summed up by asserting, as our social common sense actually asserts: We are individuated by the law that our trains of conscious thought and purpose are mutually

inaccessible through any mode of direct intuition. Each of us lives within the charmed circle of his own conscious will and meaning, — each of us is more or less clearly the object of his own inspection, but is hopelessly beyond the direct observation of his fellows.

Of separate streams of feeling, — of mutually inaccessible and essentially secret trains of ideas, — we men are thus constituted. By such forms and by such structure of mental life, by such divisions which no human power can bring into one unity of insight, individual human minds are forced to exist together upon terms which make them, in so far, appear to resemble Leibnizian monads. Their only windows appear to be those which their physical organisms supply.

The third group of facts here in question is the group upon which our cultivated social common sense most insists whenever ethical problems are in question; and therefore it is precisely this third group of facts which has most interest in its bearings upon the idea of the community.

"We are all members one of another." So says the doctrine of the community. "On the contrary," so our social common sense insists: "We are beings, each of whom has a soul of his own, a destiny of his own, rights of his own, worth of his own, ideals of his own, and an individual life in which this soul, this destiny, these rights, these ideals, get their expression. No other man can do my deed for me. When I choose, my choice coalesces with the voluntary decision of no other individual." Such, I say, is the characteristic assertion to which this third group of facts leads our ordinary social pluralism.

In brief: We thus seem to be individuated by our deeds. The will whereby I choose my own deed, is not my neighbor's will. My act is my own. Another man can perform an act which repeats the type of my act, or which helps or hinders my act. But if the question arises concerning any one act: Who hath done this? — such a question admits of only one true answer. Deeds and their doers stand

in one-one correspondence. Such is the opinion of our cultivated modern ethical common sense.

Upon this individuation of the selves by their deeds appear to rest all the other just mentioned ethical aspects of our modern social pluralism. As we mentioned in an earlier lecture, primitive man is not an individualist. The clear consciousness of individual rights, dignity, worth, and responsibility seems to be a product of that moral cultivation of which we have now frequently spoken. According to the primitive law of blood revenge, it is the community and not the individual that suffers for a deed. The consciousness that my deed is peculiarly my own also forms the basis for that cultivated idea of sin of which we found Paul making use. At all events, this ethical aspect of individual self-consciousness is frequently used by common sense as one of the most impressive grounds for doubting any philosophy which appears to make light of the distinctness of the social individuals.

VIII

Nevertheless, all these varieties of individual experience, these chasms which at any one present moment seem to sunder mind and mind, and these ethical considerations which have taught us to think of one man as morally independent of another, do not tell us the whole truth about the actual constitution of the social realm. There are facts that seem to show that these many are also one. These, then, are facts which force upon us the problem of the community.

As we have now repeatedly seen, social coöperation unquestionably brings into existence languages, customs, religions. These, as Wundt declares, are indeed psychological creations. Yet a language, a custom, or a religion is not a collection of discrete psychological phenomena, each of which corresponds to some separate individual mind to which that one mental fact belongs, or is due. Thus, the English language is a mental product, — and a product possessing intelligent unity.

Its creator must be regarded as also, in some sense, a single intelligence. But the creator of the English language was no mere collection of Englishmen, each of whom added his word or phrase or accent, or other linguistic fact. The creator of English speech is the English people. Hence the English people is itself some sort of mental unit with a mind of its own.

The countless phenomena which Wundt in his Völkerpsychologie brings to our attention, constitute a philosophical problem which ought to be only the more carefully studied in case one regards the facts upon which our ordinary social pluralism rests as both unquestionable and momentous.

For if indeed men are sundered in their individual lives by the chasms which our social common sense seems to make so obvious; if they live in mutually inaccessible realms of conscious solitude; how comes it to pass that, nevertheless, in their social life, large and small bodies of men can come to act as if one common intelligence and one common

will were using the individuals as its almost helpless instruments? Here is indeed a great problem. The theories of Wundt's type have the advantage of emphasizing and defining that problem.

Our ordinary social pluralism leads us to conceive the individual streams of consciousness as if they were unable to share even a single pang of pain. No one of them, we have said, can directly read the secret of a single idea that floats in another stream. Each conscious river of individual life is close shut between its own banks, like the Oregon of Bryant's youthful poem that rolls, "and hears no sound but his own waves."

But in our actual social life, — in the market-place, or at the political gathering, or when mobs rage and imagine a vain thing, in the streets of a modern city, the close shut-in streams of consciousness now appear as if they had lost their banks altogether. They seem to flow together like rivers that are lost in the ocean, and to surge into tumultuous unity, as if they were universal tides.

Or, again, our ordinary social pluralism makes us view the individual selves as if they were Leibnizian monads that had no windows. The social phenomena of the lives of communities, on the contrary, make these monads appear as if they had no walls, or as if they became mere drops that coalesce. Our ethical pluralism makes us proudly declare, each for himself, "My deed is my own." But our collective life often seems to advise us to say, not, "I act thus;" but, "Thus the community acts in and through me." Or again, our cultivated independence declares, "I think thus and thus." But, when the ethnologist Bastian uses the formula, "Ich denke nicht; sondern es denkt in mir," the social facts, especially of primitive human thought, go far to give this formula a meaning. In Europe the discovery of individual thinking began in some sense with the early Greek philosophers. Before them, tribes and communities did the thinking.

Now such considerations are emphasized by the theories of the type which Wundt favors.

Such theories, without being able to tell us all that we should like to know regarding what constitutes the unity of a community, have in common the tendency to insist that in many cases a community behaves as an unit, and therefore must be an unit, however its inner coherence may be constituted. If, however, we admit the facts which Wundt emphasizes, it is natural to seek for some further and perhaps more concrete way of conceiving what the mental life of a community may be, and how its unity is constituted. Wundt himself has hardly done all, I think, that we could desire in this direction, and it is natural to supplement his views by others.

Such a further approach towards an insight into the problem of the community is suggested by William James's discussion of what, in his lectures here at Oxford on "The Pluralistic Universe," he called the "compounding of consciousness."

The main interests which guided James in the lectures to which I refer were indeed not

the interests which I have emphasized in the early part of this course. James was not dealing with the problems which Christianity presents; nor was he interested in the idea of the community, in the form in which I am approaching that problem. But he was concerned with general religious and metaphysical issues; and questions relating to pluralism were explicitly in the foreground of his inquiry. He was also led to take account of manifold motives which tend to show that our mental world does not merely consist of sundered fields or streams of consciousness with barriers that part them.

Those who hear me will well remember how James emphasized, in the course of his argument, the difficulties which, as he explained, had so long held him back from any form of philosophy which should involve believing that a "compounding of consciousness" occurs, or is real. How should any one conscious mind be inclusive of another, or such that it was compounded with that other? This question, as James declared, had long

seemed to him incapable of any answer in terms which should involve admitting the possibility of such "co-consciousness," if indeed our philosophy were to be permitted to remain rational at all. But James actually reached at length a point in his own reflections where, as he said, this compounding of consciousness, this Bergsonian interpenetration of the various selves, came to appear to him in certain cases an empirically verifiable fact, — or, at all events, an irresistible hypothesis. When this point was reached, James felt that, for him, a philosophical crisis had come.

James faced and passed this crisis. He did so upon the basis of his own well-known anti-intellectualism. The mental world, he said, must not be interpreted in rational terms. If the compounding of consciousness occurs, it is irrational, although real. James was rejoiced, however, to feel that, in this matter, he stood in alliance with Bergson. And so, henceforth, for James, the many selves interpenetrated, or, at all events, might do so. It was merely the sterile intellect (so he now

affirmed) which was responsible for the conceptual abstractions that had seemed to sunder various minds, not only empirically, but absolutely, and to make the compounding of consciousness impossible. It still remained for James true that we are indeed many. But this assertion no longer implied: We are sundered from one another by divisions that are absolutely impassable. We may be many selves; and yet, from these many selves, a larger self may be compounded, — a self such as one of Fechner's planetary consciousnesses was, or such as some still vaster cosmical form of mental life may be. This larger self may from above, as it were, bridge what is for us an impassable chasm. Interpenetration, which for us seems impossible, may come to pass for some higher sort of intuition.

With this treatment of the problem of the one and the many in the form in which social psychology presents it to our attention, James's account of the great cosmological questions and of their religious bearings came to an end, — just at the point where we all most needed

to know what his next step in philosophy would be.

In substance, this outcome of a long series of efforts to deal with the problems of the one and the many in the world of the mental beings was based, in the case of James, partly upon empirical phenomena, of the type reported in his "Varieties of Religious Experience," and partly upon hypothetical extensions of these empirical phenomena. These hypothetical extensions themselves were again suggested to him, partly by Fechner's speculations on the cosmical enlargements of consciousness; partly by the general voluntaristic tendencies which so long characterized James's religious thought; and partly by Bergson's use of the new category of "interpenetration" as the one especially suited to aid us in the perception of the mental world. The results brought James, at the very close of his career, into new relations with the idealistic tradition in philosophy, — a relation which I ought not here to attempt to characterize at all extensively.

But in any case, the sort of compounding of

consciousness which James favored differed in many respects from what I have in mind when I speak of the idea of the community. When the minds of James's world began to interpenetrate in earnest, as they did in this last phase of his religious speculation, they behaved much like drops of mercury that, falling, may form a pool, until, moved by one impulse or another, they break away from their union again, and flow and glitter until the next blending occur. Paul's conception of the spirit in the Church never appealed, I think, to James's mind.

But, in any case, James's final opinions, although only indirectly bearing upon our own main problem, tended to show, better than would otherwise have been possible, where the true problem lies.

IX

We may be aided in making a more decisive advance towards understanding what a community is by emphasizing at this point a motive which we have not before mentioned,

and which no doubt plays a great part in the psychology of the social consciousness.

Any notable case wherein we find a social organization which we can call, in the psychological sense, either a highly developed community or the creation or product of such a community, is a case where some process of the nature of a history — that is, of coherent social evolution — has gone on, and has gone on for a long time, and is more or less remembered by the community in question. If, ignoring history, you merely take a cross-section of the social order at any one moment; and if you thus deal with social groups that have little or no history, and confine your attention to social processes which occur during a short period of time, — for example, during an hour, or a day, or a year, — what then is likely to come to your notice takes either the predominantly pluralistic form of the various relatively independent doings of detached individuals, or else the social form of the confused activities of a crowd. A crowd, whether it be a dangerous mob, or

an amiably joyous gathering at a picnic, is not a community. It has a mind, but no institutions, no organization, no coherent unity, no history, no traditions. It may be an unit, but is then of the type which suggests James's mere blending of various consciousnesses, — a sort of mystical loss of personality on the part of its members. On the other hand, a group of independent buyers at market, or of the passers-by in a city street, is not a community. And it also does not suggest to the onlooker any blending of many selves in one. Each purchaser seeks his own affairs. There may be gossip, but gossip is not a function which establishes the life of a community. For gossip has a short memory. But a true community is essentially a product of a time-process. A community has a past and will have a future. Its more or less conscious history, real or ideal, is a part of its very essence. A community requires for its existence a history and is greatly aided in its consciousness by a memory.

If you object that a Pauline church, such as

I have so often used as an ideal instance of a community, was an institution that had been but very recently founded when the apostle wrote his epistles, then I reply at once that a Pauline church was instructed by the apostle to regard its life as a phase in the historical process of the salvation of mankind. This process, as conceived by Paul and his churches, had gone on from Adam unto Moses, from Moses unto Christ; and the very life of the community was bound up with its philosophy of history. That the memory of this community was in part legendary is beside the point. Its memory was essential to its life, and was busy with the fate of all mankind and with the course of all time.

The psychological unity of many selves in one community is bound up, then, with the consciousness of some lengthy social process which has occurred, or is at least supposed to have occurred. And the wealthier the memory of a community is, and the vaster the historical processes which it regards as belonging to its life, the richer — other things being

equal — is its consciousness that it *is* a community, that its members are somehow made one in and through and with its own life.

The Japanese are fond of telling us that their imperial family, and their national life, are coeval with heaven and earth. The boast is cheerfully extravagant; but its relation to a highly developed form of the consciousness of a community is obvious. Here, then, is a consideration belonging to social psychology, but highly important for our understanding of the sense in which a community is or can be possessed of one mental life.

X

If we ask for the reason why such a real or fancied history, possessing in general a considerable length and importance, is psychologically needed in case a group consisting of many individual human beings is to regard itself as an united community, our attention is at once called to a consideration which I regard as indeed decisive for the whole theory of the reality of the community. Obvious

as it is, however, this consideration needs to be explicitly mentioned, because the complexity of the facts often makes us neglect them.

The rule that time is needed for the formation of a conscious community is a rule which finds its extremely familiar analogy within the life of every individual human self. Each one of us knows that he just now, at this instant, cannot find more than a mere fragment of himself present. The self comes down to us from its own past. It needs and is a history. Each of us can see that his own idea of himself as this person is inseparably bound up with his view of his own former life, of the plans that he formed, of the fortunes that fashioned him, and of the accomplishments which in turn he has fashioned for himself. A self is, by its very essence, a being with a past. One must look lengthwise backwards in the stream of time in order to see the self, or its shadow, now moving with the stream, now eddying in the currents from bank to bank of its channel, and now strenuously straining onwards in the pursuit of its own chosen good.

At this present moment I am indeed here, as this creature of the moment, — sundered from the other selves. But nevertheless, if considered simply in this passing moment of my life, I am hardly a self at all. I am just a flash of consciousness, — the mere gesticulation of a self, — not a coherent personality. Yet memory links me with my own past, — and not, in the same way, with the past of any one else. This joining of the present to the past reveals a more or less steady tendency, — a sense about the whole process of my remembered life. And this tendency and sense of my individual life agree, on the whole, with the sense and the tendencies that belong to the entire flow of the time-stream, so far as it has sense at all. My individual life, my own more or less well-sundered stream of tendency, not only is shut off at each present moment by various barriers from the lives of other selves, — but also constitutes an intelligible sequence in itself, so that, as I look back, I can say: "What I yesterday intended to pursue, that I am to-day still pursuing."

"My present carries farther the plan of my past." Thus, then, I am one more or less coherent plan expressed in a life. "The child is father to the man." My days are "bound each to each by mutual piety."

Since I am this self, not only by reason of what now sunders me from the inner lives of other selves, but by reason of what links me, in significant fashion, to the remembered experiences, deeds, plans, and interests of my former conscious life, I need a somewhat extended and remembered past to furnish the opportunity for my self to find, when it looks back, a long process that possesses sense and coherence. In brief, my idea of myself is an interpretation of my past, — linked also with an interpretation of my hopes and intentions as to my future.

Precisely as I thus define myself with reference to my own past, so my fellows also interpret the sense, the value, the qualifications, and the possessions of my present self by virtue of what are sometimes called my antecedents. In the eyes of his fellow-men,

the child is less of a self than is the mature man; and he is so not merely because the child just now possesses a less wealthy and efficient conscious life than a mature man possesses, but because the antecedents of his present self are fewer than are the antecedents of the present self of the mature man. The child has little past. He has accomplished little. The mature man bears the credit and the burden of his long life of deeds. His former works qualify his present deeds. He not only possesses, but in great part is, for his fellow-men, a record.

These facts about our individual self-consciousness are indeed well known. But they remind us that our idea of the individual self is no mere present datum, or collection of data, but is based upon an interpretation of the sense, of the tendency, of the coherence, and of the value of a life to which belongs the memory of its own past. And therefore these same facts will help us to see how the idea of the community is also an idea which is impressed upon us whenever we make a suffi-

ciently successful and fruitful effort to interpret the sense, the coherent interest, and the value of the relations in which a great number of different selves stand to the past.

XI

Can many different selves, all belonging to the present time, possess identically the same past as their own personally interesting past life? This question, if asked about the recent past, cannot be answered in the affirmative, unless one proposes either to ignore or in some way to set aside the motives which, in our present consciousness, emphasize, as we have seen, the pluralism of the social selves. Quite different, however, becomes the possible answer to this question if, without in the least ignoring our present varieties and sunderings, one asks the question concerning some past time that belongs to previous generations of men. For then each of two or more men may regard the same fact of past life as, in the same sense, a part of his own personal life. Two men of the present

time may, for instance, have any number of ancestors in common. To say this is not to ignore the pluralistic view of the selves, but only to make mention of familiar facts of descent. But now if these men take great interest in their ancestors, and have a genuine or legendary tradition concerning the ancestors, each of the two men of the present time may regard the lives, the deeds, the glory, and perhaps the spiritual powers or the immortal lives of certain ancestors, now dwelling in the spirit-world, as a part of his own self. Thus, when the individual Maori, in New Zealand, in case he still follows the old ways, speaks of the legendary canoes in which the ancestors of old came over from the home land called Hawaiki to New Zealand, he says, choosing the name of the canoe according to his own tribe and tradition, "*I* came over in the canoe Tai-Nui." Now any two members of a tribe whose legendary ancestors came over in Tai-Nui, possess, from their own point of view, identically the same past, in just this respect. Each of the two men in

question has the same reason, good or bad, for extending himself into the past, and for saying, "I came over in that canoe." Now the belief in this identity of the past self of the ancestor of the canoe, belonging to each of the two New Zealanders, does not in the least depend upon ignoring, or upon minimizing, the present difference between these two selves. The present consciousnesses do not in the least tend to interpenetrate. Neither of the two New Zealanders in question need suppose that there is now any compounding of consciousness. Each may keep aloof from the other. They may be enemies. But each has a reason, and an obvious reason, for extending himself into the ancestral past.

My individual self extends backwards, and is identified with my remembered self of yesterday, or of former years. This is an interpretation of my life which in general turns upon the coherence of deeds, plans, interests, hopes, and spiritual possessions in terms of which I learn to define myself. Now my remembered past is in general easily to be

distinguished from the past of any other self. But if I am so interested in the life or in the deeds of former generations that I thus extend, as the Maori extends, my own self into the ancestral past, the self thus extended finds that the same identical canoe or ancestor is part of my own life, and also part of the ideally extended life of some fellow-tribesman who is now so different a being, and so sharply sundered from my present self.

Now, in such a case, how shall I best describe the unity that, according to this interpretation of our common past, links my fellow-tribesmen and myself? A New Zealander says, "We are of the same canoe." And a more general expression of such relations would be to say, in all similar cases, "We are of the same community."

In this case, then, the real or supposed identity of certain interesting features in a past which each one of two or of many men regards as belonging to his own historically extended former self, is a ground for saying that all these many, although now just as

various and as sundered as they are, constitute, with reference to this common past, a community. When defined in such terms, the concept of the community loses its mystical seeming. It depends indeed upon an interpretation of the significance of facts, and does not confine itself to mere report of particulars; but it does not ignore the present varieties of experience. It depends also upon an interpretation which does not merely say, "These events happened," but adds, "These events belong to the life of this self or of this other self." Such an interpretation we all daily make in speaking of the past of our own familiar individual selves. The process which I am now using as an illustration, — the process whereby the New Zealander says, "I came over in that canoe," — extends the quasi-personal memory of each man into an historical past that may be indefinitely long and vast. But such an extension has motives which are not necessarily either mystical or monistic. We all share those motives, and use them, in our own way, and according to

our ideals, whenever we consider the history of our country, or of mankind, or of whatever else seems to us to possess a history that is significantly linked with our personal history.

XII

Just as each one of many present selves, despite the psychological or ethical barriers which now keep all of these selves sundered, may accept the same past fact or event as a part of himself, and say, "That belonged to my life," even so, each one of many present selves, despite these same barriers and sunderings, may accept the same future event, which all of them hope or expect, as part of his own personal future. Thus, during a war, all of the patriots of one of the contending nations may regard the termination of the war, and the desired victory of their country, so that each one says: "I shall rejoice in the expected surrender of that stronghold of the enemy. That surrender will be my triumph."

Now when many contemporary and dis-

tinct individual selves so interpret, each his own personal life, that each says of an individual past or of a determinate future event or deed: "That belongs to my life;" "That occurred, or will occur, to me," then these many selves may be defined as hereby constituting, in a perfectly definite and objective, but also in a highly significant, sense, a community. They may be said to constitute a community *with reference* to that particular past or future event, or group of events, which each of them accepts or interprets as belonging to his own personal past or to his own individual future. A community constituted by the fact that each of its members accepts as part of his own individual life and self the same *past* events that each of his fellow-members accepts, may be called a *community of memory*. Such is any group of persons who individually either remember or commemorate the same dead, — each one finding, because of personal affection or of reverence for the dead, that those whom he commemorates form for him a part of his own past existence.

A community constituted by the fact that each of its members accepts, as part of his own individual life and self, the same expected *future* events that each of his fellows accepts, may be called a *community of expectation*, or upon occasion, a *community of hope*.

A community, whether of memory or of hope, exists relatively to the past or future facts to which its several members stand in the common relation just defined. The concept of the community depends upon the interpretation which each individual member gives to his own self, — to his own past, — and to his own future. Every one of us does, for various reasons, extend his interpretation of his own individual self so that from his own point of view, his life includes many far-away temporal happenings. The complex motives of such interpretations need not now be further examined. Enough, — these motives may vary from self to self with all the wealth of life. Yet when these interests of each self lead it to accept any part or item of the same past or the same future which an-

other self accepts as its own, — then pluralism of the selves is perfectly consistent with their forming a community, either of memory or of hope. How rich this community is in meaning, in value, in membership, in significant organization, will depend upon the selves that enter into the community, and upon the ideals in terms of which they define themselves, their past, and their future.

With this definition in mind, we see why long histories are needed in order to define the life of great communities. We also see that, if great new undertakings enter into the lives of many men, a new community of hope, unified by the common relations of its individual members to the same future events, may be, upon occasion, very rapidly constituted, even in the midst of great revolutions.

The concept of the community, as thus analyzed, stands in the closest relation to the whole nature of the time-process, and also involves recognizing to the full both the existence and the significance of individual selves. In what sense the individual selves constitute

the community we can in general see, while we are prepared to find that, for the individual selves, it may well prove to be the case that a real community of memory or of hope is necessary in order to secure their significance. Our own definition of a community can be illustrated by countless types of political, religious, and other significant communities which you will readily be able to select for yourselves. Without ignoring our ordinary social pluralism, this definition shows how and why many selves may be viewed as actually brought together in an historical community. Without presupposing any one metaphysical interpretation of experience, or of time, our definition shows where, in our experience and in our interpretation of the time-process, we are to look for a solution of the problem of the community. Without going beyond the facts of human life, of human memory, and of human interpretation of the self and of its past, our definition clears the way for a study of the constitution of the real world of the spirit.

X

THE BODY AND THE MEMBERS

LECTURE X

THE BODY AND THE MEMBERS

HENCEFORTH, in these lectures, I shall restrict the application of the term "community" to those social groups which conform to the definition stated at the close of our last lecture. Not every social group which behaves so that, to an observer, it seems to be a single unit, meets all the conditions of our definition. Our new use of the term "community" will therefore be more precise and restricted than was our earlier employment of the word. But our definition will clear the way for further generalizations. It will enable us to express our reasons for much that, in our study of the Christian doctrine of life, had to be stated dogmatically, and illustrated rather than intimately examined.

We have repeatedly spoken of two levels of human life, the level of the individual and the level of the community. We have now in our

hands the means for giving a more precise sense to this expression, and for furnishing a further verification of what we asserted about these two levels of life. We have also repeatedly emphasized the ethical and religious significance of loyalty; but our definition will help us to throw clearer light upon the sources of this worth. And by thus sharpening the outlines of our picture of what a real community is, we shall be made ready to consider whether the concept of the community possesses a more than human significance. Let us recall our new definition to mind, and then apply it to our main problems.

I

Our definition presupposes that there exist many individual selves. Suppose these selves to vary in their present experiences and purposes as widely as you will. Imagine them to be sundered from one another by such chasms of mutual mystery and independence as, in our natural social life, often seem hopelessly to divide and secrete the inner world

of each of us from the direct knowledge and estimate of his fellows. But let these selves be able to look beyond their present chaos of fleeting ideas and of warring desires, far away into the past whence they came, and into the future whither their hopes lead them. As they thus look, let each one of them ideally enlarge his own individual life, extending himself into the past and future, so as to say of some far-off event, belonging, perhaps, to other generations of men, "I view that event as a part of my own life." "That former happening or achievement so predetermined the sense and the destiny which are now mine, that I am moved to regard it as belonging to my own past." Or again: "For that coming event I wait and hope as an event of my own future."

And further, let the various ideal extensions, forwards and backwards, include at least one common event, so that each of these selves regards that event as a part of his own life.

Then, *with reference to the ideal common past and future in question, I say that these selves*

constitute a community. This is henceforth to be our definition of a community. The present variety of the selves who are the members of the spiritual body so defined, is not hereby either annulled or slighted. The motives which determine each of them thus ideally to extend his own life, may vary from self to self in the most manifold fashion.

Our definition will enable us, despite all these varieties of the members, to understand in what sense any such community as we have defined exists, and is one.

Into this form, which, when thus summarily described, seems so abstract and empty, life can and does pour the rich contents and ideals which make the communities of our human world so full of dramatic variety and significance.

II

The *first* condition upon which the existence of a community, in our sense of the word, depends, is the power of an individual self to extend his life, in ideal fashion, so as to regard

it as including past and future events which lie far away in time, and which he does not now personally remember. That this power exists, and that man has a self which is thus ideally extensible in time without any definable limit, we all know.

This power itself rests upon the principle that, however a man may come by his idea of himself, the self is no mere datum, but is in its essence a life which is interpreted, and which interprets itself, and which, apart from some sort of ideal interpretation, is a mere flight of ideas, or a meaningless flow of feelings, or a vision that sees nothing, or else a barren abstract conception. How deep the process of interpretation goes in determining the real nature of the self, we shall only later be able to estimate.

There is no doubt that what we usually call our personal memory does indeed give us assurances regarding our own past, so far as memory extends and is trustworthy. But our trust in our memories is itself an interpretation of their data. All of us regard as be-

longing, even to our recent past life, much that we cannot just now remember. And the future self shrinks and expands with our hopes and our energies. No one can merely, from without, set for us the limits of the life of the self, and say to us: "Thus far and no farther."

In my ideal extensions of the life of the self, I am indeed subject to some sort of control, — to what control we need not here attempt to formulate. I must be able to give myself some sort of reason, personal, or social, or moral, or religious, or metaphysical, for taking on or throwing off the burden, the joy, the grief, the guilt, the hope, the glory of past and of future deeds and experiences; but I must also myself personally share in this task of determining how much of the past and the future shall ideally enter into my life, and shall contribute to the value of that life.

And if I choose to say, "There is a sense in which *all* the tragedy and the attainment of an endless past and future of deeds and of fortunes enter into my own life," I say only

what saints and sages of the most various creeds and experiences have found their several reasons for saying. The fact and the importance of such ideal extensions of the self must therefore be recognized. Here is the first basis for every clear idea of what constitutes a community.

The ideal extensions of the self may also include, as is well known, not only past and future events and deeds, but also physical things, whether now existent or not, and many other sorts of objects which are neither events nor deeds. The knight or the samurai regarded his sword as a part of himself. One's treasures and one's home, one's tools, and the things that one's hands have made, frequently come to be interpreted as part of the self. And any object in heaven or earth may be thus ideally appropriated by a given self. The ideal self of the Stoic or of the Mystic may, in various fashions, identify its will, or its very essence, with the whole universe. The Hindoo seer seeks to realize the words: "I am Brahm;" "That art thou."

In case such ideal extensions of the self are consciously bound up with deeds, or with other events, such as belong to the past or future life which the self regards as its own, our definition of the community warrants us in saying that many selves form one community when all are ideally extended so as to include the same object. But unless the ideal extensions of the self thus consciously involve past and future deeds and events that have to do with the objects in question, we shall not use these extensions to help us to define communities.

For our purposes, the community is a being that attempts to accomplish something in time and through the deeds of its members. These deeds belong to the life which each member regards as, in ideal, his own. It is in this way that both the real and the ideal Church are intended by the members to be communities in our sense. An analogous truth holds for such other communities as we shall need to consider. The concept of the community is thus, for our purposes, a practical

conception. It involves the idea of deeds done, and ends sought or attained. Hence I shall define it in terms of members who themselves not only live in time, but conceive their own ideally extended personalities in terms of a time-process. In so far as these personalities possess a life that is for each of them his own, while it is, in some of its events, common to them all, they form a community.

Nothing important is lost, for our conception of the community, by this formal restriction, whereby common objects belong to a community only when these objects are bound up with the deeds of the community. For, when the warrior regards his sword as a part of himself, he does so because his sword is the instrument of his will, and because what he does with his sword belongs to his literal or ideal life. Even the mystic accomplishes his identification of the self and the world only through acts of renunciation or of inward triumph. And these acts are the goal of his life. Until he attains to them, they form part of his ideal future self. Whenever he

fully accomplishes these crowning acts of identification, the separate self no longer exists. When knights or mystics form a community, in our sense, they therefore do so because they conceive of deeds done, in common, with their swords, or of mystical attainments that all of them win together.

Thus then, while no authoritative limit can be placed upon the ideal extensions of the self in time, those extensions of the self which need be considered for the purposes of our theory of the community are indeed extensions in time, past or future; or at all events involve such extensions in time.

Memory and hope constantly incite us to the extensions of the self which play so large a part in our daily life. Social motives of endlessly diverse sort move us to consider "far and forgot" as if to us it were near, when we view ourselves in the vaster perspectives of time. It is, in fact, the ideally extended self, and not, in general, the momentary self, whose life is worth living, whose sense outlasts our fleeting days, and whose destiny may be

worthy of the interest of beings who are above the level of human individuals. The present self, the fleeting individual of to-day, is a mere gesticulation of a self. The genuine person lives in the far-off past and future as well as in the present. It is, then, the ideally extended self that is worthy to belong to a significant community.

III

The *second* condition upon which the existence of a community depends is the fact that there are in the social world a number of distinct selves capable of social communication, and, in general, engaged in communication.

The distinctness of the selves we have illustrated at length in our previous discussion. We need not here dwell upon the matter further, except to say, expressly, that a community does *not* become one, in the sense of my definition, by virtue of any reduction or melting of these various selves into a single merely present self, or into a mass of passing experience. That mystical phenomena may

indeed form part of the life of a community, just as they may also form part of the life of an individual human being, I fully recognize.

About such mystical or quasi-mystical phenomena, occurring in their own community, the Corinthians consulted Paul. And Paul, whose implied theory of the community is one which my own definition closely follows, assured them in his reply that mystical phenomena are not essential to the existence of the community; and that it is on the whole better for the life of such a community as he was addressing, if the individual member, instead of losing himself "in a mystery," kept his own individuality, in order to contribute his own edifying gift to the common life. Wherein this common life consists we have yet further to see in what follows.

The *third* of the conditions for the existence of the community which my definition emphasizes consists in the fact that the ideally extended past and future selves of the members include at least some events which are, for all these selves, identical. This third con-

dition is the one which furnishes both the most exact, the most widely variable, and the most important of the motives which warrant us in calling a community a real unit. The Pauline metaphor of the body and the members finds, in this third condition, its most significant basis, — a basis capable of exact description.

IV

In addition to the instance which I cited at the last time, when I mentioned the New Zealanders and their legendary canoes, other and much more important illustrations may here serve to remind us how a single common past or future event may be the central means of uniting many selves in one spiritual community. For the Pauline churches the ideal memory of their Lord's death and resurrection, defined in terms of the faith which the missionary apostle delivered to them in his teaching, was, for each believer, an acknowledged occurrence in his own past. For each one was taught the faith, "In that one

event my individual salvation was accomplished."

This faith has informed ever since the ideal memory upon which Christian tradition has most of all depended for the establishment and the preservation of its own community. If we speak in terms of social psychology, we are obliged, I think, to regard this belief as the product of the life of the earliest Christian community itself. But once established, and then transmitted from generation to generation, this same belief has been ceaselessly recreative of the communities of each succeeding age. And the various forms of the Christian Church, — its hierarchical institutions, its schisms, its reformations, its sects, its heresies, have been varied, differentiated, or divided, or otherwise transformed, according as the individual believers who made up any group of followers of Christian tradition have conceived, each his own personal life as including and as determined by that one ideal event thus remembered, namely, his Lord's death and resurrection.

Since the early Church was aware of this dependence of its community upon its memory, it instinctively resisted every effort to deprive that memory of definiteness, to explain it away as the Gnostic heresies did, or to transform it from a memory into any sort of conscious allegory. The idealized memory, the backward looking faith of an individual believer, must relate to events that seem to him living and concrete. Hence the early Church insisted upon the words, "Suffered under Pontius Pilate." The religious instinct which thus insisted was true to its own needs. A very definite event must be viewed by each believer as part of the history of his own personal salvation. Otherwise the community would lose its coherence.

Paul himself, despite his determination to know Christ, not "after the flesh," but "after the Spirit," was unhesitating and uncompromising with regard to so much of the ideal Christian memory as he himself desired each believer to carry clearly in mind. Only by such common memories could the community

be constituted. To be sure, the Apostle's Christology, on its more metaphysical side, cared little for such more precise technical formulations as later became historically important for the Church that formulated its creeds. But the events which Paul regarded as essential to salvation must be, as he held, plainly set down.

Since human memory is naturally sustained by commemorative acts, Paul laid the greatest possible stress upon the Lord's Supper, and made the proper ordering thereof an essential part of his ideal as a teacher. In this act of commemoration, wherein each member recalled the origin of his own salvation, the community maintained its united life.

V

The early Church was, moreover, not only a community of memory, but a community of hope. Since, if the community was to exist, and to be vigorously alive, each believer must keep definite his own personal hope, while the event for which all hoped must be, for

all, an identical event, something more was needed, in Paul's account of the coming end of the world, than the more dimly conceived common judgment had hitherto been in the minds of the Corinthians to whom Paul wrote. And therefore the great chapter on the resurrection emphasizes equally the common resurrection of all, and the very explicitly individual immortality of each man. Paul uses both the resurrection of Christ, and the doctrine of the spiritual body, to give the sharpest possible outlines to a picture which has ever since dominated not only the traditional Christian religious imagination, but the ideal of the united Church triumphant.

Nowhere better than in this very chapter can one find an example of the precise way in which the fully developed consciousness of a community solves its own problem of the one and the many, by clearly conceiving both the diversity of the members and the unity of the body in terms of the common hope for the same event.

The Apostle had to deal with the doctrine

of the immortality of the individual man, and also with the corporate relations of humanity and of the Church to death and to the end of all things. The most pathetic private concerns and superstitions of men, the most conflicting ideas of matter, of spirit, and of human solidarity, had combined, in those days, to confuse the religious ideas which entered into the life of the early Church, when the words "death and resurrection" were in question. The Apostle himself was heir to a seemingly hopeless tangle of ancient and more or less primitive opinions regarding the human self and the cosmos, regarding the soul and the future.

A mystery-religion of Paul's own time might, and often did, assure the individual initiate of his own immortality. The older Messianic hope, or its successor in the early Christian consciousness, might be expressed, and was often expressed, in a picture wherein all mankind were together called before the judgment seat at the end. But minds whose ideas upon such topics came from various

and bewildering sources, — minds such as those of Paul's Corinthians, might, and did, inquire: "What will personally happen to me? What will happen to all mankind?" The very contrast between these two questions was, at that time, novel. The growing sense of the significance of the individual self was struggling against various more or less mystical identifications of all mankind with Adam, or with some one divine or demonic power or spirit. Such a struggle still goes on to-day.

But Paul's task it was, in writing this chapter, to clarify his own religious consciousness, and to guide his readers through the mazes of human hope and fear to some precise view, both of human solidarity and individual destiny. His method consisted in a definition of his whole problem in terms of the relation between the individual, the community, and the divine being whom he conceived as the very life of this community. He undertook to emphasize the individual self, and yet to insist upon the unity of the

Church and of its Lord. He made perfectly clear in each believer's mind the idea: "I myself, and not another, am to witness and to take part in this last great change." To this end Paul made use of the conception of the individual spiritual body of each man. But Paul also dwelt with equal decisiveness upon the thought, "This last event of the present world is to be, for all of us, *one* event; for we shall all together arise."

These two main thoughts of the great chapter are in the exposition clearly contrasted and united; and against this well-marked background Paul can then place statements about humanity viewed as one corporate entity, — monistic formulations, so to speak, — and can do this without fear of being misunderstood: "The first man Adam became a living soul. The last Adam became a quickening spirit. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven." What these more monistic statements about mankind as one corporate entity are to mean, is made clear simply

by teaching each believer to say, "I shall myself arise, with my own transformed and incorruptible body;" and also to say, "This event of the resurrection is one for all of us, for we shall arise together."

In such expressions Paul uses traditions whose sources were indeed obscure and whose meaning was, as one might have supposed, hopelessly ambiguous. The interpretations of these traditions on Paul's part might have been such as to lose sight of the destiny of the individual human being through a more or less mystical blending of the whole race. That would have been natural for a mind trained to think of Adam and of mankind as Paul was trained. Or, again, the interpretation might have taken the form of assuring the individual believer that he could win his own immortality, while leaving him no further ground for special interest in the community. Paul's religious genius aims straight at the central problem of clearing away this ambiguity, and of defining the immortal life, both of the individual and of the community.

In the expected resurrection, as Paul pictures it, the individual finds his own life, and the community its common triumph over all the world-old powers of death. And the hope is referred back again to the memory. Was not Christ raised? By this synthesis Paul solves his religious problem, and defines sharply the relation of the individual and the community.

And therefore, whenever, upon the familiar solemn occasions, this chapter is read, not only is individual sorrow bidden to transform itself into an unearthly hope; but even upon earth the living and conscious community of the faithful celebrates the present oneness of spirit in which it triumphs. And the death over which it triumphs is the death of the lonely individual, whom faith beholds raised to the imperishable life in the spirit. This life in the spirit is also the life of the community. For the individual is saved, according to Paul, only in and through and with the community and its Lord.

VI

Our present interest in these classic religious illustrations of the idea of the community is not directly due to their historical importance as parts of Christian tradition; but depends upon the help which they give us in seeing how a community, whether it be Christian or not, can really constitute a single entity, despite the multiplicity of its members. Our illustrations have brought before us the fact that hope and memory constitute, in communities, a basis for an unquestionable consciousness of unity, and that this common life in time does not annul the variety of the individual members at any one present moment.

We have still to see, however, the degree to which this consciousness of unity can find expression in an effectively united common life which not only contains common events, but also possesses common deeds and can arouse a common love — a love which passes the love wherewith individuals can love one another.

And here we reach that aspect of the conception of the community which is the most important, and also the most difficult aspect.

VII

A great and essentially dramatic event, such as the imagined resurrection of the bodies of all men, — an event which interests all, and which fixes the attention by its miraculous apparition, — is well adapted to illustrate the union of the one and the many in the process of time. When Paul's genius seized upon this picture, — when, to use the well-known later scholastic phraseology, the spirits of men were thus "individuated by their bodies," even while the event of the resurrection fixed the eye of faith upon one final crisis through which all were to pass "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," — when the Apostle thus instructed the faithful, a great lesson was also taught regarding the means whereby the ideal of a community and the harmonious union of the one and the many can be rendered brilliantly clear to the

imagination, and decisively fascinating to the will.

But the lives of communities cannot consist of miraculous crises. A community, like an individual self, must learn to keep the consciousness of its unity through the vicissitudes of an endlessly shifting and often dreary fortune. The monotony of insignificant events, the chaos of lesser conflicts, the friction and the bickerings of the members, the individual failures and the mutual misunderstandings which make the members of a community forget the common past and future, — all these things work against the conscious unity of the life of a community. Memory and hope are alike clouded by multitudes of such passing events. The individual members cannot always recall the sense in which they identify their own lives and selves with what has been, or with what is yet to come.

And — hardest task of all — the members, if they are to conceive clearly of the common life, must somehow learn to bear in mind not

merely those grandly simple events which, like great victories, or ancestral feats, or divine interferences, enter into the life of the community from without, and thus make their impression all at once.

No, the true common life of the community consists of deeds which are essentially of the nature of processes of coöperation. That is, the common life consists of deeds which many members perform together, as when the workmen in a factory labor side by side.

Now we all know that coöperation constantly occurs, and is necessary to every form and grade of society. We also know that commerce and industry and art and custom and language consist of vast complexes of coöperations. And in all such cases many men manage in combination to accomplish what no one man, and no multitude of men working separately, could conceivably bring to pass. But what we now need to see is the way in which such coöperations can become part, not only of the life, but of the consciousness of a community.

VIII

Every instance of a process of coöperation is an event, or a sequence of events. And our definition of a community requires that, if such coöperative activities are to be regarded as the deeds of a community, there must be individuals, each one of whom says: "That coöperation, in which many distinct individuals take part, and in which I also take part, is, or was, or will be, an event in my life." And many coöperating individuals must agree in saying this of the same process in which they all coöperate.

And all must extend such identifications of the self with these social activities far into the past, or into the future.

But it is notoriously hard — especially in our modern days of the dreary complexity of mechanical labor — for any individual man so to survey, and so to take interest in a vast coöperative activity that he says: "In my own ideally extended past and future that activity, its history, its future, its significance

as an event or sequence of events, all have their ideally significant part. That activity, as the coöperation of many in one work, is also my life." To say such things and to think such thoughts grow daily harder for most of the coworkers of a modern social order.

Hence, as is now clear, the existence of a highly organized social life is by no means identical with the existence of what is, in our present and restricted sense, the life of a true community. On the contrary, and for the most obvious reasons, there is a strong mutual opposition between the social tendencies which secure coöperation on a vast scale, and the very conditions which so interest the individual in the common life of his community that it forms part of his own ideally extended life. We met with that opposition between the more or less mechanically coöperative social life, — the life of the social will on the one side, and the life of the true community on the other side, — when we were considering the Pauline doctrine of the law in an

earlier lecture. In fact, it is the original sin of any highly developed civilization that it breeds coöperation at the expense of a loss of interest in the community.

The failure to see the reason why this opposition between the tendency to coöperation and the spirit of the community exists; the failure to sound to the depths the original sin of man the social animal, and of the natural social order which he creates; — such failure, I repeat, lies at the basis of countless misinterpretations, both of our modern social problems, and of the nature of a true community, and of the conditions which make possible any wider philosophical generalizations of the idea of the community.

IX

Men do not form a community, in our present restricted sense of that word, merely in so far as the men coöperate. They form a community, in our present limited sense, when they not only coöperate, but accompany this coöperation with that ideal extension of

the lives of individuals whereby each coöperating member says: "This activity which we perform together, this work of ours, its past, its future, its sequence, its order, its sense, — all these enter into my life, and are the life of my own self writ large."

Now coöperation results from conditions which a social psychology such as that of Wundt or of Tarde may analyze. Imitation and rivalry, greed and ingenuity, business and pleasure, war and industry, may all combine to make men so coöperate that very large groups of them behave, to an external observer, as if they were units. In the broader sense of the term "community," all social groups that behave as if they were units are regarded as communities. And we ourselves called all such groups communities in our earlier lectures before we came to our new definition.

But we have now been led to a narrower application of the term "community." It is an application to which we have restricted the term simply because of our special pur-

pose in this inquiry. Using this restricted definition of the term "community," we see that groups which coöperate may be very far from constituting communities in our narrower sense. We also see how, in general, a group whose coöperative activities are very highly complex will require a correspondingly long period of time to acquire that sort of tradition and of common expectation which is needed to constitute a community in our sense, — that is, a community conscious of its own life.

Owing to the psychological conditions upon which social coöperation depends, such cooperation can very far outstrip, in the complexity of its processes, the power of any individual man's wit to understand its intricacies. In modern times, when social cooperation both uses and is so largely dominated by the industrial arts, the physical conditions of coöperative social life have combined with the psychological conditions to make any thorough understanding of the coöperative processes upon which we all depend simply

hopeless for the individual, except within some narrow range. Experts become well acquainted with aspects of these forms of coöperation which their own callings involve. Less expert workers understand a less range of the coöperative processes in which they take part. Most individuals, in most of their work, have to coöperate as the cogs coöperate in the wheels of a mechanism. They work together; but few or none of them know how they coöperate, or what they must do.

But the true community, in our present restricted sense of the word, depends for its genuine common life upon such coöperative activities that the individuals who participate in these common activities understand enough to be able, first, to direct their own deeds of coöperation; secondly, to observe the deeds of their individual fellow workers, and thirdly to know that, without just this combination, this order, this interaction of the coworking selves, just this deed could not be accomplished by the community. So, for

instance, a chorus or an orchestra carries on its coöperative activities. In these cases coöperation is a conscious art. If hereupon these coöperative deeds, thus understood by the individual coworker, are viewed by him as linked, through an extended history with past and future deeds of the community, and if he then identifies his own life with this common life, and if his fellow members agree in this identification, then indeed the community both has a common life, and is aware of the fact. For then the individual coworker not only says: "This past and future fortune of the community belongs to my life;" but also declares: "This past and future deed of coöperation belongs to my life." "This, which none of us could have done alone, — this, which all of us together could not have accomplished unless we were ordered and linked in precisely this way, — this we together accomplished, or shall yet accomplish; and this deed of all of us belongs to my life."

A community thus constituted is essentially

a community of those who are artists in some form of coöperation, and whose art constitutes, for each artist, his own ideally extended life. But the life of an artist depends upon his love for his art.

The community is made possible by the fact that each member includes in his own ideally extended life the deeds of coöperation which the members accomplish. When these deeds are hopelessly complex, how shall the individual member be able to regard them as genuinely belonging to his own ideally extended life? He can no longer understand them in any detail. He takes part in them, willingly or unwillingly. He does so because he is social, and because he must. He works in his factory, or has his share, whether greedily or honestly, in the world's commercial activities. And his coöperations may be skilful; and this fact also he may know. But his skill is largely due to external training, not to inner expansion of the ideals of the self. And the more complex the social order grows, the more all this coöperation must

tend to appear to the individual as a mere process of nature, and not as his own work, — as a mechanism and not as an ideal extension of himself, — unless indeed love supplies what individual wit can no longer accomplish.

X

If a social order, however complex it may be, actually wins and keeps the love of its members; so that, — however little they are able to understand the details of their present coöperative activities, — they still — with all their whole hearts and their minds and their souls, and their strength — desire, each for himself, that such coöperations should go on; and if each member, looking back to the past, rejoices in the ancestors and the heroes who have made the present life of this social group possible; and if he sees in these deeds of former generations the source and support of his present love; and if each member also looks forward with equal love to the future, — then indeed love furnishes that basis for the consciousness of the com-

munity which intelligence, without love, in a highly complex social realm, can no longer furnish. Such love — such loyalty — depends not upon losing sight of the variety of the callings of individuals, but upon seeing in the successful coöperation of all the members precisely that event which the individual member most eagerly loves as his own fulfilment.

When love of the community, nourished by common memories, and common hope, both exists and expresses itself in devoted individual lives, it can constantly tend, despite the complexity of the present social order, to keep the consciousness of the community alive. And when this takes place, the identification of the loyal individual self with the life of the community will tend, both in ideal and in feeling, to identify each self not only with the distant past and future of the community, but with the present activities of the whole social body.

Thus, for instance, when the complexities of business life, and the dreariness of the

factory, have, to our minds, deprived our present social coöperations of all or of most of their common significance, the great communal or national festivity, bringing to memory the great events of past and future, not only makes us, for the moment, feel and think as a community with reference to those great past and future events, but in its turn, as a present event, reacts upon next day's ordinary labors. The festivity says to us: "We are one because of our common past and future, because of the national heroes and victories and hopes, and because we love all these common memories and hopes." Our next day's mood, consequent upon the festivity, bids us say: "Since we are thus possessed of this beloved common past and future, let this consciousness lead each of us even to-day to extend his ideal self so as to include the daily work of all his fellows, and to view his fellow members' life as his own."

Thus memory and hope tend to react upon the present self, which finds the brotherhood

of present labor more significant, and the ideal identification of the present self with the self of the neighbor easier, because the ideal extension of the self into past and future has preceded.

And so, first, each of us learns to say: "This beloved past and future life, by virtue of the ideal extension, is my own life." Then, finding that our fellows have and love this past and future in common with us, we learn further to say: "In this respect we are all one loving and beloved community." Then we take a further step and say: "Since we are all members of this community, therefore, despite our differences, and our mutual sunderings of inner life, each of us can, and will, ideally extend his present self so as to include the present life and deeds of his fellow."

So it is that, in the ideal church, each member not only looks backwards to the same history of salvation as does his fellow, but is even thereby led to an ideal identification of his present self with that of his fellow member

that would not otherwise be possible. Thus, then, common memory and common hope, the central possessions of the community, tend, when enlivened by love, to mould the consciousness of the present, and to link each member to his community by ideal ties which belong to the moment as well as to the stream of past and future life.

XI

Love, when it exists and triumphs over the complexities which obscure and confuse the common life, thus completes the consciousness of the community, in the forms which that consciousness can assume under human conditions. Such love, however, must be one that has the common deeds of the community as its primary object. No one understands either the nature of the loyal life, or the place of love in the constitution of the life of a real community, who conceives such love as merely a longing for the mystical blending of the selves or for their mutual interpenetration, and for that only. Love

says to the individual: "So extend yourself, in ideal, that you aim, with all your heart and your soul and your mind and your strength, at *that* life of perfectly definite deeds which never can come to pass unless all the members, despite their variety and their natural narrowness, are in perfect coöperation. Let this life be your art and also the art of all your fellow members. Let your community be as a chorus, and not as a company who forget themselves in a common trance."

Nevertheless, as Paul showed in the great chapter, such love of the self for the community can be and will be not without its own mystical element. For since we human beings are as narrow in our individual consciousness as we are, we cannot ideally extend ourselves through clearly understanding the complicated social activities in which the community is to take part. Therefore our ideal extensions of the self, when we love the community, and long to realize its life with intimacy, must needs take the form of *acting as if we could survey*, in some single

unity of insight, that wealth and variety and connection which, as a fact, we cannot make present to our momentary view. Since true love is an emotion, and since emotions are present affections of the self, love, in longing for its own increase, and for its own fulfilment, inevitably longs to find what it loves as a fact of experience, and to be in the immediate presence of its beloved. Therefore, the love of a community (a love which, as we now see, is devoted to desiring the realization of an overwhelmingly vast variety and unity of coöperations), is, as an emotion, discontent with all the present sundering of the selves, and with all the present problems and mysteries of the social order. Such love, then, restless with the narrowness of our momentary view of our common life, desires this common life to be an immediate presence for all of us. Such an immediate presence of all the community to all the members would be indeed, if it could wholly and simply take place, a mere blending of the selves, — an interpenetration in which the individuals

vanished, and in which, for that very reason, the real community would also be lost.

Love, — the love of Paul's great chapter, — the loyalty which stands at the centre of the Christian consciousness, — is, as an emotion, a longing for such a mystical blending of the selves. This longing is present in Paul's account. It is in so far not the whole of charity. It is simply the mystical aspect of the love for the community.

But the Pauline charity is not merely an emotion. It is an interpretation. The ideal extension of the self gets a full and concrete meaning only by being actively expressed in the new deeds of each individual life. Unless each man knows how distinct he is from the whole community and from every member of it, he cannot render to the community what love demands, — namely, the devoted work. Love may be mystical, and work should be directed by clearly outlined intelligence; but the loyal spirit depends upon this union of a longing for unity with a will which needs its own expression in works of loyal art.

XII

The doctrine of the two levels of human existence; the nature of a real community; the sense in which there can be, in individual human beings, despite their narrowness, their variety, and their sundered present lives, a genuine consciousness of the life of a community whereof they are members: — these matters we have now, within our limits, interpreted. The time-process, and the ideal extensions of the self in this time-process, lie at the basis of the whole theory of the community. The union and the contrast of the one and the many in the community, and the relation of the mystical element in our consciousness of the community to the active interpretation of the loyal life, these things have also been reviewed. Incidentally, so to speak, we have suggested further reasons why loyalty, whether in its distinctively Christian forms, or in any others, is a saving principle whenever it appears in an individual human life. For in the love of a community the individual ob-

tains, for his ideally extended self, precisely the unity, the wealth, and the harmony of plan which his sundered natural existence never supplies.

Yet it must be not merely admitted, but emphasized, that all such analyses of the sort of life and of interpretation upon which communities and the loyalty of their members depend, does not and cannot explain the origin of loyalty, the true sources of grace, and the way in which communities of high level come into existence.

On the contrary, all the foregoing account of what a community is shows how the true spirit of loyalty, and the highest level of the consciousness of a human community, is at once so precious, and so difficult to create.

The individual man naturally, but capriciously, loves both himself and his fellow-man, according as passion, pity, memory, and hope move him. Social training tends to sharpen the contrasts between the self and the fellow-man; and higher cultivation, under these conditions of complicated social coöperation which we have just pointed out, indeed makes

a man highly conscious that he depends upon his community, but also renders him equally conscious that, as an individual, he is much beset by the complexities of the social will, and does not always love his community, or any community. Neither the origin nor the essence of loyalty is explained by man's tendencies to love his individual fellow-man.

It is true that, within the limits of his power to understand his social order, the conditions which make a man conscious of his community also imply that the man should in some respects identify his life with that. But I may well know that the history, the future, the whole meaning of my community are bound up with my own life; and yet it is not necessary that on that account I should wholeheartedly love my own life. I may be a pessimist. Or I may be simply discontented. I may desire to escape from the life that I have. And I may be aware that my fellows, for the most part, also long to escape.

That the community is above my own individual level I shall readily recognize, since

the community is indeed vastly more skilful and incomparably more powerful than I can ever become. But what is thus above me I need not on that account be ready wholly to love. To be sure, that man is indeed a sad victim of a misunderstood life who is himself able to be clearly aware of his community, to identify its history and its future, at least in part, with his own ideally extended life, and who is yet *wholly* unable ever to love the life which is thus linked with his own. Yet there remains the fate which Paul so emphasized, and which has determined the whole history of the Christian consciousness: Knowledge of the community is not love of the community. Love, when it comes, comes as from above.

Especially is this true of the love of the ideal community of all mankind. I can be genuinely in love with the community only in case I have somehow fallen in love with the universe. The problem of love is human. The solution of the problem, if it comes at all, will be, in its meaning, superhuman, and divine, if there be anything divine.

What our definition of the community enables us to add to our former views of the meaning of loyalty is simply this: If the universe proves to be, in any sense, of the nature of a community, then love for this community, and for God, will not mean merely love for losing the self, or for losing the many selves, in any interpenetration of selves. If one can find that all humanity, in the sense of our definition, constitutes a real community, or that the world itself is, in any genuine way, of the nature of a community such as we have defined; and *if* hereupon we can come to love this real community, — then the one and the many, the body and the members, our beloved and ourselves, will be joined in a life in which we shall be both preserved as individuals, and yet united to that which we love.

XIII

Plainly a metaphysical study of the question whether the universe is a community will be as powerless as the foregoing analysis of the real nature of human communities to explain

the origin of love, or to make any one fall in love with the universe. Yet something has been gained by our analysis of the problem which, from this point onwards, determines our metaphysical inquiry. If our results are in any way positive, they may enable us to view the problem of Christianity, that is, the problem of the religion of loyalty, in a larger perspective than that which human history, when considered alone, determines. The favorite methods of approaching the metaphysical problems of theology end by leaving the individual alone with God, in a realm which seems, to many minds, a realm of merely concepts, of intellectual abstractions, of barren theories. The ways which are just now in favor in the philosophy of religion seem to end in leaving the individual equally alone with his intuitions, his lurid experiences of sudden conversion, or his ineffable mysteries of saintly peace.

May we not hope to gain by a method which follows the plan now outlined? This method, first, encourages a man to interpret

his own individual self in terms of the largest ideal extension of that self in time which his reasonable will can acknowledge as worthy of the aims of his life. Secondly, this method bids a man consider what right he has to interpret the life from which he springs, in the midst of which he now lives, as a life that in any universal sense coöperates with his own and ideally expresses its own meaning so as to meet with his own, and to have a history identical with his own. Thirdly, this method directs us to inquire how far, in the social order to which we unquestionably belong, there are features such as warrant us in hoping that, in the world's community, our highest love may yet find its warrant and its fulfilment.

Whatever the fortunes of the quest may be, we have now defined its plan, and have shown its perfectly definite relation to the historical problem of Christianity.

XI

PERCEPTION, CONCEPTION, AND INTERPRETATION

LECTURE XI

PERCEPTION, CONCEPTION, AND INTERPRETATION

IN defining what constitutes a community I have repeatedly mentioned processes of Interpretation. The word "interpretation" is well known; and students of the humanities have special reasons for using it frequently. When one calls an opinion about the self an interpretation, one is not employing language that is familiar only to philosophers. When a stranger in a foreign land desires the services of an interpreter, when a philologist offers his rendering of a text, when a judge construes a statute, some kind of interpretation is in question. And the process of interpretation, whatever it is, is intended to meet human needs which are as well known as they are vital. Such needs determine, as we shall see, whatever is humane and articulate in the whole conduct and texture of our lives.

I

Yet if we ask, What is an interpretation? — the answer is not easy. Nor is it made much easier by stating the question in the form: What does one desire who seeks for an interpretation? What does one gain, or create, or acknowledge who accepts an interpretation?

Our investigation has reached the point where it is necessary to face these questions, as well as some others closely related to them. For, as a fact, to inquire what the process of interpretation is, takes us at once to the very heart of philosophy, throws a light both on the oldest and on the latest issues of metaphysical thought, and has an especially close connection with the special topics to which this course is devoted.

II

First, then, let me briefly recall the ways in which we have already been brought into contact with questions involving the nature of interpretation.

Our whole undertaking is an effort to interpret vital features of Christianity. Each of the three ideas which I have viewed as essential to the Christian doctrine of life had to be interpreted first for itself, and then in its connection with the others. You might have supposed that, when we turned to our metaphysical problems, we should henceforth have to do with questions of fact, and not with interpretations. But we have found that we could not decide how the Christian doctrine of life is related to the real world without defining what we mean by a community. A community, as we have seen, depends for its very constitution upon the way in which each of its members interprets himself and his life. For the rest, nobody's self is either a mere datum or an abstract conception. A self is a life whose unity and connectedness depend upon some sort of interpretation of plans, of memories, of hopes, and of deeds. If, then, there are communities, there are many selves who, despite their variety, so interpret their lives that all these lives, taken together,

get the type of unity which our last lecture characterized. Were there, then, no interpretations in the world, there would be neither selves nor communities. Thus our effort to study matters of fact led us back to problems of interpretation. These latter problems obviously dominate every serious inquiry into our problem of Christianity.

What, however, is any philosophy but an interpretation either of life, or of the universe, or of both? Does there exist, then, any student of universally interesting issues who is not concerned with an answer to the question, What is an interpretation?

Possibly these illustrations of our topic, few as they are, seem already so various in their characters as to suggest that the term "interpretation" may be too vague in its applications to admit of precise definition. A rendering of a text written in a foreign tongue; a judge's construction of a statute; a man's interpretation of himself and of his own life; our own philosophical interpretation of this or of that religious idea; and the practical

interpretation of our destiny, or of God, which a great historical religion itself seems to have taught to the faithful; or, finally, a metaphysical interpretation of the universe, — what — so you may ask — have all these things in common? What value can there be in attempting to fix by a definition such fluent and uncontrollable interests as inspire what various people may call by the common name interpretation?

III

I reply that, beneath all this variety in the special motives which lead men to interpret objects, there exists a very definable unity of purpose. Look more closely, and you shall see that to interpret, or to attempt an interpretation, is to assume an attitude of mind which differs, in a notable way, from the other attitudes present in the intelligent activities of men; while this attitude remains essentially the same amidst very great varieties, both in the individual interpreters and in the interpretations which they seek, or undertake, or

accept. Interpretation, viewed as a mental process, or as a type of knowledge, differs from other mental processes and types of knowledge in the objects to which it is properly applied, in the relations in which it stands to these objects, and in the ends which it serves.

In order to show you that this is the case, I must summarize in my own way some still neglected opinions which were first set forth, in outline, more than forty years ago by our American logician, Mr. Charles Peirce, in papers which have been little read, but which, to my mind, remain of very high value as guides of inquiry, both in Logic and in the Theory of Knowledge.[1]

[1] Of the early papers of Mr. Charles Peirce to which reference is here made, the most important are: —

1. In the *Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, a paper: "On a New List of Categories," May 14, 1867.

2. In the *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, Vol. II (1868–1869): "Questions concerning Certain Faculties claimed for Man."

3. *Id.:* "Some Consequences of Four Incapacities."

4. *Id.:* "Grounds of the Validity of the Laws of Logic; Further Consequences of Four Incapacities."

In addition to these early papers we may mention: —

5. Article "Sign" in Baldwin's "Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology," — a brief statement regarding an important point of Peirce's theory.

Mr. Charles Peirce has become best known to the general public by the part which William James assigned to him as the inventor of the term "Pragmatism," and as, in some sense, the founder of the form of Pragmatism which James first made his own, and then developed so independently and so significantly. But by a small and grateful company of philosophical students, Mr. Peirce is prized, not solely, and not, I think, mainly for his part in the early history of Pragmatism, but for his contributions to Logic, and for those remarkable cosmological speculations which James also, in his lectures on the *Pluralistic Universe* (as some of you will remember), heartily acknowledged.

Those ideas of Charles Peirce about Interpretation to which I shall here refer, never, so far as I know, attracted William James's personal attention at any time. I may add that, until recently, I myself never appreciated their significance. In acknowledging here my present indebtedness to these ideas, I have to add that, in this place, there is no room

to expound them at length. The context in which these views appear, both in the earliest of the published logical papers of Peirce (about 1868), and in many of his later discussions, is always very technical, and is such that no adequate discussion of the issues involved could be presented in a brief statement. Moreover, it is proper to say that Charles Peirce cannot be held responsible for the use that I shall here make of his opinions, or for any of the conclusions that I base upon them.

There is one additional matter which should be emphasized at the outset. Peirce's opinions as to the nature of interpretation were in no wise influenced by Hegel, or by the tradition of German idealism. He formed them on the basis of his own early scientific studies, and of his extensive, although always very independent, interest in the history of scholastic logic. With recent idealism this "father of Pragmatism" has always felt only a very qualified sympathy, and has frequently expressed no little dissatisfaction. Some twelve years ago, just after I had printed a book on

general philosophy, Mr. Charles Peirce wrote to me, in a letter of kindly acknowledgment, the words: "But, when I read you, I do wish that you would study logic. You need it so much."

Abandoning, then, any effort to state Peirce's case as he stated it, let me next call attention to matters which I should never have viewed as I now view them without his direct or indirect aid.

IV

The contrast between the cognitive processes called, respectively, perception and conception, dominates a great part of the history of philosophy. This contrast is usually so defined as to involve a dual classification of our cognitive processes. When one asks which of the two processes, perception or conception, gives us the more significant guidance, or is the original from which the other is derived, or is the ideal process whereof the other is the degenerate fellow, such a dual classification is in possession of the field.

This classic dual opposition was expressed, in characteristically finished fashion, at the outset of the lectures which Professor Bergson read, in May of last year, at the invitation of the University of Oxford. You all remember his words: "If our power of external and internal perception were unlimited, we should never make use of our power to conceive, or of our power to reason. To conceive is a makeshift in the cases where one cannot perceive; and one reasons only in so far as one needs to fill gaps in our outer or inner perception, or to extend the range of perception."

Here, as is obvious, there is no recognition of the possible or actual existence of a third type of cognitive process, which is neither perception nor conception. The assertion that conception is our makeshift when perception is limited, and that unlimited perception, by rendering conception superfluous, would supply us with that grade of intuition which we, in ideal, attribute to a divine being, involves the postulate that we face the alter-

native: Either perception, or else conception.

But if one were to oppose the thesis just cited by declaring in favor of conception as against perception; if one were to assert that perception deceives us with vain show, and that conception alone can bring us face to face with reality; if, in short, one were to prefer Plato to Bergson, — one would not thereby necessarily be led to abandon, — one might, on the contrary, all the more emphasize this dual classification of the possible cognitive processes. In such a predominantly dualistic view of the classification of knowledge, both rationalism and empiricism have, on the whole, agreed, throughout the history of thought. Kant and James, Bergson and Mr. Bertrand Russell, are, in this respect, at one.

To be sure, in addition to perception and conception, reason and the reasoning process have been very frequently recognized as having some sort of existence for themselves, over and above the processes of simple per-

ception and conception. Yet when Bergson speaks of reasoning, in the passage just cited from his Oxford lecture, reasoning, for him, means a special form or grade of the conceptual process itself, and is therefore no third type of cognition. When Kant made his well-known triadic distinctions of sense, understanding, and reason, assigning to sense the power of perceiving, to understanding the power to form and to use concepts, and to reason a third function which Kant did not always define in the same way, — he did not really succeed in escaping from the classical dualism with regard to the processes of cognition. For Kant's account of reason assigns to it, in general, a high grade of conceptual functions, as opposed to perceptual functions; and thus still depends upon the dual contrast between perception and conception. Kant is nearest to defining a third type of cognitive process in many of his accounts of what he calles the *Urtheilskraft*. But he never consistently maintains a triadic classification of the cognitive processes.

V

Despite this prevalence of the dual classification of our cognitive processes, most of us will readily acknowledge that, in our real life, we human beings are never possessed either of pure perception or of pure conception. In ideal, we can define an intuitive type of knowledge, which should merely see, and which should never think. In an equally ideal fashion, we can imagine the possibility of a pure thought, which should be wholly absorbed in conceptions, which should have as its sole real object a realm of universals, and which should ignore all sensible data. But we mortals live the intelligent part of our lives through some sort of more or less imperfect union or synthesis of conception and perception.

In recent discussion it has become almost a commonplace to recognize this union as constantly exemplified in human experience. In this one respect, to-day, empiricists and rationalists, pragmatists and intellectualists, are accustomed to agree, although great dif-

ferences arise with regard to *what* union of perception and conception constitutes such knowledge as we human beings can hopefully pursue or actually possess.

Kant, assuring us that conceptions without perceptions are "empty," and that perceptions without conceptions are "blind," sets forth, in his theory of knowledge, the well-known account of how the "spontaneity" of the intellect actively combines the perceptual data, and brings the so-called "manifold of sense" to "unity of conception."

Recent pragmatism, laying stress upon the "practical" character of every human cognitive process, depicts the life of knowledge as a dramatic pursuit of perceptions, — a pursuit guided by the "leadings" which our conceptions determine, and which, in some sense, simply constitute our conceptions, in so far as these have genuine life.

When, a number of years ago, I began a general metaphysical inquiry by defining an idea as a "plan of action," and thereupon developed a theory of knowledge and of reality,

upon bases which this definition helped me to formulate, I was making my own use of thoughts which, in their outlines, are at the present day common property. The outcome of my own individual use of this definition was a sort of absolute pragmatism, which has never been pleasing either to rationalists or to empiricists, either to pragmatists or to the ruling type of absolutists. But in so far as I simply insisted upon the active meaning of ideas, my statement had something in common with many forms of current opinion which agree with one another in hardly any other respect. Only the more uncompromising of the mystics still seek for knowledge in a silent land of absolute intuition, where the intellect finally lays down its conceptual tools, and rests from its pragmatic labors, while its works do not follow it, but are simply forgotten, and are as if they never had been. Those of us who are not such uncompromising mystics, view accessible human knowledge neither as pure perception nor as pure conception, but always as depending upon the marriage of the two processes.

VI

Yet such a recognition of an active synthesis of perception and conception does not by itself enable us to define a genuinely triadic classification of the types of knowing processes. Let me illustrate this fact by another quotation from Bergson. In a passage in the first of his two Oxford lectures, our author says: "I do not deny the usefulness of abstract and general ideas, — any more than I question the value of bank-notes. But just as the note is only a promise to pay cash, so a conception has value only by virtue of the eventual perceptions for which it stands."

In these words, as you see, the antithesis, "conception," "perception," corresponds to the antithesis, "bank-note" and "cash," and the other antithesis, "credit-value," "cash-value." All these corresponding antitheses involve or depend upon dual classifications. Now it is true, and is expressly pointed out by Bergson, that the members of each of these pairs, — the credit-value, and the cash-

value, — as well as the bank-note and its equivalent in gold, — are brought into a certain synthesis by the existence of a process of promising, and of redeeming the promise. A promise, however, involves a species of activity. In case of the bank-note, this activity may express whatever makes some vast commercial system solvent, or may be based upon the whole power of a great modern state.

In very much the same way, many philosophers of otherwise widely different opinions recognize that conception and perception are, in live cognitive processes, brought into synthesis by some sort of activity, — the activity of the mind whose cognitions are in question. This activity may be one of attention. Or it may consist of a series of voluntary deeds.

But in each of these cases, the members of a pair, "bank-note and cash," or "conception and perception," are first antithetically opposed to each other; and then a third or active element, a promise, a volition, or what you will, is mentioned as that which brings

the members of the pair into synthesis. But this third or synthetic factor is not thus co-ordinated with the two opposed members of the pair.

If action, or activity, is the name given to whatever brings perceptions and conceptions into synthesis, then this third factor is not hereby set side by side, both with perception and with conception as a third form of cognitive activity. For action may be viewed as a non-cognitive function, — and classified as "conation." Or, on the contrary, action may be viewed as that grade of cognition which, being neither conception alone, nor perception alone, but the synthesis of the two, is the *only* mature and successfully completed cognitive process. Both of these views have been asserted. We need not discuss them here. But, in any case, "action" or "activity" is not itself hereby defined as a third type of cognition; any more than the activity of promising to pay, in Bergson's illustration, is defined as a third sort of currency which is neither gold nor bank-notes.

Thus far, then, the classification of the cognitive processes as being either perceptions or else conceptions remains triumphant, and is not superseded by regarding genuine knowledge as a synthesis of these two. For the dual contrast between perception and conception dominates all such opinions.

VII

Yet cognition may be considered from a slightly different point of view.

It is natural to classify cognitive processes by their characteristic objects. The object of a perception is a datum of some sort, a *thing*, or perhaps, as Bergson insists, a *change*, or whatever else we may be able immediately to apprehend. The object of a conception is an *universal* of some sort, a *general* or *abstract character*, a *type*, a *quality*, or some complex object based upon such universals. Now do all objects of cognition belong to one of these two classes? If so, in which of these classes will you place your neighbor's mind, or any of the conscious acts of that mind?

Is your neighbor's mind a *datum* that you could, were your perception "unlimited," simply find *present* to you, as *red* or as a "change" can be present? Is your neighbor's mind, on the contrary, an abstraction, a mere *sort* of being, an *universal* which you merely conceive? If a conception resembles a bank-note in being a promise to pay, which needs to be redeemed in the gold of perception, — then what immediate perception of your own could ever render to you the "cash-value" of your idea of your neighbor's mind? On the other hand, your present and personal idea of your neighbor's mind is certainly not itself such a perceptual "cash-value" for you. Your neighbor's mind is no mere *datum* to your sense at any time.

If, then, there be any cognitive process whose proper object is your neighbor's mind, this process is neither a mere conception nor yet a mere perception. Is it, then, some synthesis or combination of perceptions and conceptions? Or is it, finally, some third form of cognitive process, which is neither

perception nor conception, and which cannot be completely describable in terms of combined perceptions and conceptions? Now it appears that the word "interpretation" is a convenient name for a process which at least aims to be cognitive. And the proper object of an interpretation, as we usually employ the name, is either something of the nature of a mind, or else is a process which goes on in a mind, or, finally, is a sign or expression whereby some mind manifests its existence and its processes. Let us consider, then, more closely, whether the process of interpretation, in so far as its proper object is a mind, or is the sign of a mind, can be reduced to a pure perception, or to pure conception, or to any synthesis which merely involves these two.

VIII

We shall here be aided by a very familiar instance, suggested by the very illustration which Bergson uses in pointing out the contrast between perception and conception, and in emphasizing the secondary and purely in-

strumental character of the process of conception. Gold coin, as Bergson reminds us, corresponds, in its value for the ordinary business of buying and selling, to perceptions as they appear in our experience. Bank-notes correspond, in an analogous fashion, to conceptions. The notes are promises to pay cash. The conceptions are useful guides to possible perceptions. The link between the note and its cash-value is the link which the activity of making and keeping the promises of a solvent bank provides. The link between the conception and its corresponding perception is the link which some active synthesis, such as voluntary seeking, or creative action, or habitual conduct, or intention, supplies. The illustration is clear. In a special way perceptions do indeed correspond to cash-values, and conceptions to credit-values. But in the world of commercial transactions there are other values than simple cash-values and credit-values. Perhaps, therefore, in the realm of cognitive processes there may be analogous varieties.

Recall the familiar case wherein a traveller crosses the boundary of a foreign country. To the boundary he comes provided, let us say, with the gold and with bank-notes of his own country, but without any letter of credit. This side of the boundary his bank-notes are good because of their credit-value. His gold is good because, being the coinage of the realm, it possesses cash-value and is legal tender. But beyond the boundary, in the land to which he goes, the coin which he carries is no longer legal tender, and possibly will not pass at all in ordinary transactions. His bank-notes may be, for the moment, valueless, not because the promise stamped upon their face is irredeemable, but because the gold coin itself into which they could be converted upon presentation at the bank in question, would not be legal tender beyond the boundary.

Consequently, at the boundary, a new process may be convenient, if not, for the traveller's purpose, indispensable. It is the process of exchanging coin of the realm which

he leaves for that of the foreign land which he enters. The process may be easy or difficult, may be governed by strict rules or else may be capricious, according to the conditions which prevail at the boundary. But it is a third process, which consists neither in the presentation of cash-values nor in the offering or accepting of credit-values. It is a process of interpreting the cash-values which are recognized by the laws and customs of one realm in terms of the cash-values which are legal tender in another country. It is also a process of proceeding to act upon the basis of this interpretation. We are not concerned with the principles which make this interpretation possible, or which guide the conduct either of the traveller or of the money-changer at the boundary. What interests us here is simply the fact that a new type of transaction is now in question. It is a process of money-changing, — a special form of exchange of values, but a form not simply analogous to the type of the activities whereby conceptions are provided with their corre-

sponding perceptions. And this form is not reducible to that of the simple contrast between credit-values and cash-values.

IX

Each of us, in every new effort to communicate with our fellow-men, stands, like the traveller crossing the boundary of a new country, in the presence of a largely strange world of perceptions and of conceptions. Our neighbor's perceptions, in their immediate presence, we never quite certainly share. Our neighbor's conceptions, for various reasons which I need not here enumerate, are so largely communicable that they can often be regarded, with a high degree of probability, as identical, in certain aspects of their meaning, with our own. But the active syntheses, the practical processes of seeking and of construction, the volitions, the promises, whereby we pass from our own concepts to our own percepts, are often in a high degree individual. In that case it may be very difficult to compare them to the corresponding pro-

cesses of our neighbors; and then a mutual understanding, in respect of our activities and their values, is frequently as hard to obtain as is a direct view of one another's sensory perceptions. "I never loved you," so says Hamlet to Ophelia. "My lord, you made me believe so." Here is a classic instance of a problem of mutual interpretation. Who of us can solve this problem for Hamlet and Ophelia?

Therefore, in our efforts to view the world as other men view it, our undertaking is very generally analogous to the traveller's financial transactions when he crosses the boundary. We try to solve the problem of learning how to exchange the values of our own lives into the terms which can hope to pass current in the new or foreign spiritual realms whereto, when we take counsel together, we are constantly attempting to pass. Both the credit-values and the cash-values are not always easily exchanged.

I have no hope of showing, in the present discussion, how and how far we can make sure

that, in a given case of human social intercourse, we actually succeed in fairly exchanging the coinage of our perceptions and the bank-notes of our conceptions into the values which pass current in the realm beyond the boundary. What measure of truth our individual interpretations possess, and by what tests we verify that truth, I have not now to estimate. But I am strongly interested in the fact that, just as the process of obtaining cash for our bank-notes is not the same as the process of exchanging our coins for foreign coins when we pass the border, precisely so the process of verifying our concepts through obtaining the corresponding percepts is not the same as the process of interpreting our neighbors' minds.

A philosophy which, like that of Bergson, defines the whole problem of knowledge in terms of the classic opposition between conception and perception, and which then declares that, if our powers of perception were unlimited, the goal of knowledge would be reached, simply misses the principal problem,

both of our daily human existence and of all our higher spiritual life, as well as of the universe. And in bidding us seek the solution of our problems in terms of perception, such a doctrine simply forbids us to pass any of the great boundaries of the spiritual world, or to explore the many realms wherein the wealth of the spirit is poured out. For neither perception nor conception, nor any combination of the two, nor yet their synthesis in our practical activities, constitutes the whole of any interpretation. Interpretation, however, is what we seek in all our social and spiritual relations; and without some process of interpretation, we obtain no fulness of life.

X

It would be wrong to suppose, however, that interpretation is needed and is used only in our literal social relations with other individual human beings. For it is important to notice that one of the principal problems in the life of each of us is the problem of

interpreting himself. The bare mention of Hamlet's words reminds us of this fact. Ophelia does not understand Hamlet. But does he understand himself?

In our inner life it not infrequently happens that we have — like the traveller, or like Hamlet in the ghost-scene, or like Macbeth when there comes the knocking on the gate — to pass a boundary, to cross into some new realm, not merely of experience, but of desire, of hope, or of resolve. It is then our fortune not merely that our former ideas, as the pragmatists say, no longer "work," and that our bank-notes can no longer be cashed in terms of the familiar inner perceptions which we have been accustomed to seek. Our situation is rather this: that *both* our ideas *and* our experiences, both our plans and our powers to realize plans, both our ideas with their "leadings" and our intuitions, are in process of dramatic transformation. At such times we need to know, like Nebuchadnezzar, both our dream and its interpretation.

Such critical passing of a boundary in

one's own inner world is a well-known event in youth, when what Goethe called: —

Neue Liebe, neues Leben,
Neue Hoffnung, neues Sehnen,

makes one say to one's heart: —

Ich erkenne dich nicht mehr.

Yet, not only youth, but personal calamity, or other "moving accident," or, in a more inspiring way, the call of some new constructive task, or, in the extreme case, a religious conversion, may at any time force one or another of us to cross a boundary in a fashion similar to those just illustrated.

At such times we are impressed with the fact that there is no royal road to self-knowledge. Charles Peirce, in the earliest of the essays to which I am calling your attention, maintained (quite rightly, I think) that there is no direct intuition or perception of the self. Reflection, as Peirce there pointed out, involves what is, in its essence, an interior conversation, in which one discovers one's own mind through a process of inference analogous to the very modes of inference which

guide us in a social effort to interpret our neighbors' minds. Such social inference is surely no merely conceptual process. But it cannot be reduced to the sort of perception which Bergson invited you, in his Oxford lectures, to share. Although you are indeed placed in the "interior" of yourself, you can never so far retire into your own inmost recesses of intuition as merely to find the true self presented to an inner sense.

XI

So far I have merely sketched, with my own illustrations, a few notable features of Peirce's early opinions about interpretation. We are now ready for his central thesis, which, with many variations in detail, he has retained in all his later discussions of the processes in question. I beg you not to be discouraged by the fact that, since Peirce has always been, first of all, a logician, he states this central thesis in a decidedly formal fashion, which I here somewhat freely imitate. We shall soon see the usefulness of this formal procedure.

Interpretation always involves a relation of three terms. In the technical phrase, interpretation *is* a triadic relation. That is, you cannot express any complete process of interpreting by merely naming two terms, — persons, or other objects, — and by then telling what dyadic relation exists between one of these two and the other.

Let me illustrate: Suppose that an Egyptologist translates an inscription. So far two beings are indeed in question: the translator and his text. But a genuine translation cannot be merely a translation in the abstract. There must be some language into which the inscription is translated. Let this translation be, in a given instance, an English translation. Then the translator interprets something; but he interprets it only to one who can read English. And if a reader knows no English, the translation is for such a reader no interpretation at all. That is, a triad of beings — the Egyptian text, the Egyptologist who translates, and the possible English reader — are equally necessary in or-

der that such an English interpretation of an Egyptian writing should exist. Whenever anybody translates a text, the situation remains, however you vary texts or languages or translators, essentially the same. There must exist some one, or some class of beings, to whose use this translation is adapted; while the translator is somebody who expresses himself by mediating between two expressions of meanings, or between two languages, or between two speakers or two writers. The mediator or translator, or interpreter, must, in cases of this sort, himself know both languages, and thus be intelligible to both the persons whom his translation serves. The triadic relation in question is, in its essence, non-symmetrical, — that is, unevenly arranged with respect to all three terms. Thus somebody (let us say A) — the translator or interpreter — interprets somebody (let us say B) to somebody (let us say C). If you transpose the order of the terms, — A, B, C, — an account of the happening which constitutes an interpretation

must be altered, or otherwise may become either false or meaningless.

Thus an interpretation is a relation which not only involves three terms, but brings them into a determinate order. One of the three terms is the interpreter; a second term is the object — the person or the meaning or the text — which is interpreted; the third is the person to whom the interpretation is addressed.

This may, at first, seem to be a mere formality. But nothing in the world is more momentous than the difference between a pair and a triad of terms may become, if the terms and the relations involved are themselves sufficiently full of meaning.

You may observe that, when a man perceives a thing, the relation is dyadic. A perceives B. A pair of members is needed, and suffices, to make the relation possible. But when A interprets B to C, a triad of members (whereof, as in case of other relations, two or all three members may be wholly, or in part, identical) must exist in order to

make the interpretation possible. Let illustrations show us how important this formal condition of interpretation may become.

When a process of conscious reflection goes on, a man may be said to interpret himself to himself. In this case, although but one personality, in the usual sense of the term, is in question, the relation is still really a triadic relation. And, in general, in such a case, the man who is said to be reflecting remembers some former promise or resolve of his own, or perhaps reads an old letter that he once wrote, or an entry in a diary. He then, at some present time, interprets this expression of his past self.

But, usually, he interprets this bit of his past self to his future self. "This," he says, "is what I meant when I made that promise." "This is what I wrote or recorded or promised." "Therefore," he continues, addressing his future self, "I am now committed to doing thus," "planning thus," and so on.

The interpretation in question still constitutes, therefore, a triadic relation. And

there are three men present in and taking part in the interior conversation: the man of the past whose promises, notes, records, old letters, are interpreted; the present self who interprets them; and the future self to whom the interpretation is addressed. Through the present self the past is so interpreted that its counsel is conveyed to the future self.

XII

The illustration just chosen has been taken from the supposed experience of an individual man. But the relations involved are capable of a far-reaching metaphysical generalization. For this generalization I cannot cite the authority of Peirce. I must deal with just this aspect of the matter in my own way.

The relations exemplified by the man who, at a given present moment, interprets his own past to his own future, are precisely analogous to the relations which exist when any past state of the world is, at any present moment, so linked, through a definite his-

torical process, with the coming state of the world, that an intelligent observer who happened to be in possession of the facts could, were he present, interpret to a possible future observer the meaning of the past. Such interpretation might or might not involve definite predictions of future events. History or biography, physical or mental processes, might be in question; fate or free will, determinism or chance, might rule the region of the world which was under consideration. The most general distinctions of past, present, and future appear in a new light when considered with reference to the process of interpretation.

In fact, what our own inner reflection exemplifies is outwardly embodied in the whole world's history. For what we all mean by past time is a realm of events whose historical sense, whose records, whose lessons, we may now interpret, in so far as our memory and the documents furnish us the evidences for such interpretation. We may also observe that what we mean by future time is a

realm of events which we view as more or less under the control of the present will of voluntary agents, so that it is worth while to give to ourselves, or to our fellows, counsel regarding this future. And so, wherever the world's processes are recorded, wherever the records are preserved, and wherever they influence in any way the future course of events, we may say that (at least in these parts of the world) the present potentially interprets the past to the future, and continues so to do *ad infinitum*.

Such, for instance, is the case when one studies the crust of a planet. The erosions and the deposits of a present geological period lay down the traces which, if read by a geologist, would interpret the past history of the planet's crust to the observers of future geological periods.

Thus the Colorado Cañon, in its present condition, is a geological section produced by a recent stream. Its walls record, in their stratification, a vast series of long-past changes. The geologist of the present may

read these traces, and may interpret them for future geologists of our own age. But the present state of the Colorado Cañon, which will ere long pass away as the walls crumble, and as the continents rise or sink, will leave traces that may be used at some future time to interpret these now present conditions of the earth's crust to some still more advanced future, which will come to exist after yet other geological periods have passed away.

In sum, if we view the world as everywhere and always recording its own history, by processes of aging and weathering, or of evolution, or of stellar and nebular clusterings and streamings, we can simply define the time order, and its three regions, — past, present, future, — as an order of possible interpretation. That is, we can define the present as, potentially, the interpretation of the past to the future. The triadic structure of our interpretations is strictly analogous, both to the psychological and to the metaphysical structure of the world of time. And each of these structures can be stated in terms of the other.

This analogy between the relational structure of the whole time-process and the relations which are characteristic of any system of acts of interpretation seems to me to be worthy of careful consideration.

XIII

The observation of Peirce that interpretation is a process involving, from its very essence, a triadic relation, is thus, in any case, no mere logical formalism.

Psychologically speaking, the mental process which thus involves three members differs from perception and conception in three respects. First, interpretation is a conversation, and not a lonely enterprise. There is some one, in the realm of psychological happenings, who addresses some one. The one who addresses interprets some object to the one addressed. In the second place, the interpreted object is itself something which has the nature of a mental expression. Peirce uses the term "sign" to name this mental object which is interpreted. Thirdly, since the

interpretation is a mental act, and is an act which is expressed, the interpretation itself is, in its turn, a Sign. This new sign calls for further interpretation. For the interpretation is addressed to somebody. And so, — at least in ideal, — the social process involved is endless. Thus wealthy, then, in its psychological consequences, is the formal character of a situation wherein any interpretation takes place.

Perception has its natural terminus in some object perceived; and therewith the process, as would seem, might end, were there nothing else in the world to perceive. Conception is contented, so to speak, with defining the universal type, or ideal form which chances to become an object of somebody's thought. In order to define a new universal, one needs a new act of thought whose occurrence seems, in so far, an arbitrary additional cognitive function. Thus both perception and conception are, so to speak, self-limiting processes. The wealth of their facts comes to them from without, arbitrarily.

But interpretation both requires as its basis the sign or mental expression which is to be interpreted, and calls for a further interpretation of its own act, just because it addresses itself to some third being. Thus interpretation is not only an essentially social process, but also a process which, when once initiated, can be terminated only by an external and arbitrary interruption, such as death or social separation. By itself, the process of interpretation calls, in ideal, for an infinite sequence of interpretations. For every interpretation, being addressed to somebody, demands interpretation from the one to whom it is addressed.

Thus the formal difference between interpretation on the one hand, and perception and conception on the other hand, is a difference involving endlessly wealthy possible psychological consequences.

Perception is indeed supported by the wealth of our sensory processes; and is therefore rightly said to possess an endless fecundity.

But interpretation lives in a world which is endlessly richer than the realm of perception. For its discoveries are constantly renewed by the inexhaustible resources of our social relations, while its ideals essentially demand, at every point, an infinite series of mutual interpretations in order to express what even the very least conversational effort, the least attempt to find our way in the life that we would interpret, involves.

Conception is often denounced, in our day, as "sterile." But perception, taken by itself, is intolerably lonesome. And every philosophy whose sole principle is perception invites us to dwell in a desolate wilderness where neither God nor man exists. For where either God or man is in question, interpretation is demanded. And interpretation, — even the simplest, even the most halting and trivial interpretation of our daily life, — seeks what eye hath not seen, and ear hath not heard, and what it hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive, — namely, the successful interpretation of somebody to somebody.

Interpretation seeks an object which is essentially spiritual. The abyss of abstract conception says of this object: It is not in me. The heaven of glittering immediacies which perception furnishes answers the quest by saying: It is not in me. Interpretation says: It is nigh thee, — even in thine heart; but shows us, through manifesting the very nature of the object to be sought, what general conditions must be met if any one is to interpret a genuine Sign to an understanding mind. And withal, interpretation seeks a city out of sight, the homeland where, perchance, we learn to understand one another.

XIV

Our first glimpse of Charles Peirce's neglected doctrine of the logic of signs and of interpretations necessarily gives us extremely inadequate impressions. But in pointing out the parallelism between the relational characters of the time-process and those of the process of interpretation, I have already shown that the questions at issue are neither merely

intellectual, nor purely conceptual, and concern many matters which are confined neither to logic nor to descriptive psychology. As a fact, to conceive the cognitive process in terms of such a threefold division, and also in terms of such a triadic relation, as the division and the relation which Peirce brings to our attention, — to view cognition thus throws light, I believe, upon all the principal issues which are now before us.

Recent pragmatism, both in the form emphasized by James and (so far as I know) in all its other now prominent forms, depends upon conceiving two types of cognitive processes, perception and conception, as mutually opposed, and as in such wise opposed that conception merely defines the bank-notes, while only perception can supply the needed cash. In consequence of this dualistic view of the cognitive process, and in view of other considerations recently emphasized, the essential doctrine of pragmatism has come to include the two well-known theses: That truth is mutable; and that the sole criterion of the

present state of the truth is to be found in the contents of particular perceptions.

Corresponding to this form of epistemology we have, in the metaphysic of Bergson, a doctrine of reality based upon the same dual classification of the cognitive processes, and upon the same preference for perception as against its supposed sole rival.

But if we review the facts in the new light which Peirce's views about interpretation enable us, I think, to use, we shall reach results, that, as I close, I may yet barely hint.

XV

Reality, so Bergson tells us, — Reality, which must be perceived just as artists perceive its passing data, and thereby teach us to perceive what we never saw before, — Reality is essentially change, flow, movement. In perceptual time, if you abstract from the material limitations which the present bondage of our intellect forces upon us, both present and past interpenetrate, and all is one ever present duration, consisting of

endless qualitatively various but coalescing changes.

But a recognition of the existence, and a due understanding of the character of the process of interpretation, will show us, I believe, that the time-order, in its sense and interconnection, is known to us through interpretation, and is neither a conceptual nor yet a perceptual order. We learn about it through what is, in a sense, the conversation which the present, in the name of the remembered or presupposed past, addresses to the expected future, whenever we are interested in directing our own course of voluntary action, or in taking counsel with one another. Life may be a colloquy, or a prayer; but the life of a reasonable being is never a mere perception; nor a conception; nor a mere sequence of thoughtless deeds; nor yet an active process, however synthetic, wherein interpretation plays no part. Life is essentially, in its ideal, social. Hence interpretation is a necessary element of everything that, in life, has ideal value.

But when the time-process is viewed as an interpretation of the past to the future by means of our present acts of choice, then the divisions and the successions which are found in the temporal order are not, as Bergson supposes, due to a false translation of the perceived temporal flow into a spatial order. For every present deed interprets my future; and therefore divides my life into the region of what I have already done, and the region of what I have yet to accomplish. This division is due, not to the geometrical degeneration which Bergson refers to our intellect, but to one of the most significant features of the spiritual world, — namely, to the fact that we interpret all past time as irrevocable. So to interpret our past is the very foundation of all deliberate choice. But the irrevocable past changes no more. And the stupendous spiritual significance which this interpretation introduces into our view of our lives, of history, of nature, and of God, we have already had occasion to consider in the first part of this course. The philosophy

of change, the perception of an universe where all is fluent, can be interpreted only through recognizing that the past returns not; that the deed once done is never to be recalled; that what has been done is at once the world's safest treasure, and its heaviest burden.

Whoever insists upon the mutability of truth, speaks in terms of the dual classification of cognitive processes. But let one learn to know that our very conception of our temporal experience, as of all happenings, is neither a conception nor a perception, but an interpretation. Let one note that every present judgment bearing upon future experience is indeed, as the pragmatists tell us, a practical activity. But let one also see that, for this very reason, every judgment, whose meaning is concrete and practical, so interprets past experience as to counsel a future deed. Let one consider that when my present judgment, addressing my future self, counsels: "Do this," this counsel, if followed, leads to an individual deed, which henceforth irrevocably stands on the score

of my life, and can never be removed therefrom.

Hence, just as what is done cannot be undone, just so what is truly or falsely counselled by any concrete and practical judgment remains permanently true or false. For the deed which a judgment counsels remains forever done, when once it has been done.

XVI

Let me summarize the main results of this lecture: —

1. In addition to the world of conception and to the world of perception, we have to take account of a world of interpretation.

2. The features that distinguish from one another the three processes — perception, conception, and interpretation — have to do with their logical and formal characteristics, with their psychological motives and accompaniments, and with the objects to which they are directed.

3. Logically and formally considered, interpretation differs from perception and from

conception by the fact that it involves relations which are essentially triadic.

4. Psychologically, interpretation differs from perception and from conception by the fact that it is, in its intent, an essentially social process. It accompanies every intelligent conversation. It is used whenever we acknowledge the being and the inner life of our fellow-men. It transforms our own inner life into a conscious interior conversation, wherein we interpret ourselves. Both of ourselves and of our neighbors we have no merely intuitive knowledge, no complete perception, and no adequate conception. Reflection is an effort at self-interpretation.

5. Both logically and psychologically, interpretation differs from perception and from conception in that each of these latter processes derives the wealth of its facts from a world which, at least in seeming, is external to itself. Were there but one object to perceive, and one universal to conceive, one act of perception and one of conception would be, in the abstract, possible and required.

The need for new acts of perception and of conception seems to be, in so far, arbitrarily determined by the presence of new facts which are to be perceived or conceived. But interpretation, while always stimulated to fresh efforts by the inexhaustible wealth of the novel facts of the social world, demands, by virtue of its own nature, and even in the simplest conceivable case, an endless wealth of new interpretations. For every interpretation, as an expression of mental activity, addresses itself to a possible interpreter, and demands that it shall be, in its turn, interpreted. Therefore it is not the continuance, but the interruption, of the process of interpretation which appears to be arbitrary; and which seems to be due to sources and motives foreign to the act of interpretation.

6. Metaphysically considered, the world of interpretation is the world in which, if indeed we are able to interpret at all, we learn to acknowledge the being and the inner life of our fellow-men; and to understand the constitution of temporal experience, with its endlessly

accumulating sequence of significant deeds. In this world of interpretation, of whose most general structure we have now obtained a glimpse, selves and communities may exist, past and future can be defined, and the realms of the spirit may find a place which neither barren conception nor the chaotic flow of interpenetrating perceptions could ever render significant.

7. Bergson has eloquently referred us to the artists, as the men whose office it is to teach us how to perceive. Let the philosophers, he tells us, learn from the methods of the artists. In reply we can only insist, in this place, that the sole office of the artists has always been to interpret. They address us, so as to interpret to us their own perceptions, and thereby their own lives and deeds. In turn, they call upon us to renew the endless life of the community of the spirits who interpret. The artists do not do their work for "nothing," nor yet for "pleasure." They do their work because they love the unity of spirit which, through their work, is brought

into the life of mankind. The artists are in this respect not alone.

The prophets, the founders of religions, the leaders of mankind: they do not merely see; nor do they merely think; nor yet are they mere pragmatists hovering between abstract conceptions which they dislike, and particular experiences which they indeed desire, but so view that therein they find *only* the particular. Those for whom the sole contrast in the world of cognitions is that between conception and perception, stand in Faust's position. Their conceptions are indeed mere bank-notes. But alas! their perceptions are, at best, mere cash. So in desire they hasten to enjoyment, and in enjoyment pine to feel desire.

Such find indeed their "cash" of experience in plenty. But they never find what has created all the great religions, and all the deathless loyalties, and all the genuinely true insights of the human world, — namely, that interpretation of life which sends us across the borders both of our conceptual and of our

perceptual life, to lay up treasures in other worlds, to interpret the meaning of the processes of time, to read the meaning of art and of life.

8. Do you ask what this process is which thus transcends both perception and conception, I answer that it is the process in which you engage whenever you take counsel with a friend, or look in the eyes of one beloved, or serve the cause of your life. This process it is which touches the heart of reality. Let the philosophers, then, endeavor to avoid "sterile" conceptions. Let them equally avoid those wanton revels in mere perception which are at present the bane of our art, of our literature, of our social ideals, and of our religion. Let the philosophers learn from those who teach us, as the true artists do, the art of interpretation.

A few fragmentary indications of the principles of this art we may hope, at the next time, to set forth upon the bases which Charles Peirce's theory has suggested.

XII

THE WILL TO INTERPRET

LECTURE XII

THE WILL TO INTERPRET

WE have seen some of the contrasts whereby the three cognitive processes: Perception, Conception, and Interpretation, are distinguished from one another. Our next task is to become better acquainted with the work and the value of Interpretation.

I

In this undertaking we shall be guided by the special problems to which our lectures are devoted. The metaphysical inquiry concerning the nature and the reality of the community is still our leading topic. To this topic whatever we shall have to say about interpretation is everywhere subordinate. But, since, if I am right, interpretation is indeed a fundamental cognitive process, we shall need still further to illustrate its nature and its principal forms. Every apparent digression from our main path will quickly

lead us back to our central issues. Interpretation is, once for all, the main business of philosophy.

The present lecture will include two stages of movement towards our goal. First, we shall study the elementary psychology of the process of interpretation. Secondly, we shall portray the ideal that guides a truth-loving interpreter. The first of these inquiries will concern topics which are both familiar and neglected. The second part of our lecture will throw light upon the ethical problems with which our study of the Christian ideas has made us acquainted. At the close of the lecture our preparation for an outline of the metaphysics of interpretation will be completed.

II

I have called interpretation an essentially social cognitive process; and such, in fact, it is. Man is an animal that interprets; and therefore man lives in communities, and depends upon them for insight and for salvation.

But the elementary psychological forms in which interpretation appears find a place in our lives whether or no we are in company; just as a child can sing when alone, although singing is, on the whole, a social activity. We shall need to consider how an interpreter conducts his mental processes, even when he is taking no explicit account of other minds than his own.

In looking for the psychological foundations of interpretation, we shall be directed by Charles Peirce's formal definition of the mental functions which are involved. Wherever an interpretation takes place, however little it seems to be an explicitly social undertaking, a triadic cognitive process can be observed. Let us look, then, for elementary instances of such triadic processes.

In the earliest of the logical essays to which, at the last time, I referred, Charles Peirce pointed out that every instance of conscious and explicit Comparison involves an elementary form of interpretation. This observation of Peirce's enables us to study interpretation

in some of its simplest shapes, relieved of the complications which our social efforts to communicate with other minds usually involve.

Yet, even in this rudimentary form, interpretation involves the motives which, upon higher levels, make its work so wealthy in results, and so significant in its contrasts with perception and conception.

III

The most familiar instances of the mental process known as Comparison seem, at first sight, to consist of a consciousness of certain familiar dyadic relations, — relations of similarity and difference. Red contrasts with green; sound breaks in upon silence; one sensory quality collides, as it were, with another. The "shock of difference" awakens our attention. In other cases, an unexpected similarity of colors and tones attracts our interest. Or perhaps the odors of two flowers, or the flavors of two fruits, resemble one the other. Pairs of perceived objects are, in all these cases, in question. We express our

observations in such judgments as: "A resembles B;" "D is unlike E."

Now Peirce's view of the nature of comparison depends upon noticing that, familiar as such observations of similarity and dissimilarity may be, no one of them constitutes the whole of any complete act of comparison. Comparison, in the fuller sense of the word, takes place when one asks or answers the question: What constitutes the difference between A and B?" "*Wherein* does A resemble B?" "*Wherein* consists their distinction?" Let me first illustrate such a question in a case wherein the answer is easy.

If you write a word with your own hand, and hold it up before a mirror, your own handwriting becomes more or less unintelligible to you, unless you are already accustomed to read or to write mirror-script. Suppose, however, that instead of writing words yourself, you let some one else show you words already written. And suppose, further, that two words have been written side by side on the same sheet of paper, neither of them by your

own hand. Suppose one of them to have been written upright, while the other is the counterpart of the first, except that it is the first turned upside down, or else is the first in mirror-script. If, without knowing how these words have been produced, you look at them, you can directly observe that the two written words differ in appearance, and that they also have a close resemblance. But, unless you were already familiar with the results of inverting a handwriting or of observing it in a mirror, you could not thus directly observe wherein consist the similarities and the differences of the two words which lie before you on the paper.

Since you are actually familiar with mirror-script, and with the results of turning a sheet of paper upside down, you will indeed no doubt be able to name the difference of the two supposed words. But in order to compare the two words thus presented side by side on the same sheet of paper, and to tell wherein they are similar and wherein they differ, you need what Peirce calls a medi-

ating idea, or what he also calls "a third," which, as he phrases the matter, shall "represent" or "interpret" one of the two written words to, or in terms of, the other. You use such a "third" idea when you say, "This word is the mirror-script representative of that word." For now the difference is interpreted.

Thus a complete act of comparison involves such a "third," such a "mediating" image or idea, — such an "interpreter." By means of this "third" you so compare a "first" object with a "second" as to make clear to yourself wherein consists the similarity and the difference between the second and the first. Comparison must be triadic in order to be both explicit and complete. Likenesses and differences are the signs that a comparison is needed. But these signs are not their own interpretation.

Let us observe another instance of the same general type. One may be long acquainted with the difference between his own right and left hands before one learns to interpret this difference, and so to complete one's comparison, in terms of the third idea

that the one hand is a more or less imperfect mirror-image of the other hand, the imperfections being due to the lack of symmetry in our bodily structure.

Still another familiar instance of comparison will show how needful it is to choose the right "third" in order to complete one's view of the matter. One may long have observed that a friend's face, when seen in a mirror, contrasts with the same face if seen apart from the mirror. Yet it may be very hard for a given person to tell why this difference exists, or wherein it consists. I have asked the question of various intelligent and observant people, who could only reply: "It is true that in general a man's face, as I see it before me, does not perfectly resemble that man's face as it appears when I look at it in a mirror. But I cannot define the reason for this difference, or tell wherein the difference consists." The answer to the question is that, since the features of a human face are usually, in their finer details, more or less unsymmetrically disposed with reference to the vertical axis

of the body, the mirror picture, even of a fairly regular countenance, must be altered to suit these vertical asymmetries. The idea of the vertical asymmetries is here the needed "third" which interprets the difference between the man's face when seen in the mirror and when seen out of the mirror.

A lady who had passed part of her life in Australia, and part in England, once told me that, for years, she had never been able to understand the difference which, to her eyes, existed between the full moon as seen in England and as observed by her during her years in Australia. At last she found the right mediating idea, when she came to notice how Orion also gradually became partially inverted during her journeys from English latitudes to those of the far southern seas. For the full moon, as she thus came to know, must be subject to similar apparent inversions; and this was the reason why the "man in the moon" had therefore been undiscoverable when she had heretofore looked for him in Australian skies.

IV

When processes of comparison grow complicated, new "third" terms or "mediators" may be needed at each stage of one's undertaking. So it is when a literary parallel between two poets or two statesmen is in question. Now one and now another trait or event or fortune or deed may stand out as the mediating idea. But always, in such parallels, it is by means of the use of a "third" that each act of comparison is made possible, — whether the case in question be simple or complex. And the mediator plays each time the part which Peirce first formally defined.

Let there arise the problem of drawing a literary parallel between Shakespeare and Dante. The task appears hopelessly complex and indeterminate until, perhaps, the place which the sonnet occupied in the creative activity of each poet comes to our minds. Then indeed, although the undertaking is still vastly complicated, it is no longer quite so hopeless. If "with this key Shakespeare

unlocked his heart," yet held fast its deepest mysteries; while Dante accompanied each of the sonnets of the *Vita Nuova* with a comment and an explanation, yet left unspoken what most fascinates us in the supernatural figure of his beloved, — then "the sonnet," viewed as an idea of a poetical form, mediates between our ideas of the two poets, and represents or interprets each of these ideas to the other.

This last example suggests an endless wealth of complexities. And the interpretation in question is also endlessly inadequate to our demands. But on its highest levels, as in its simplest instances, the process of explicit comparison is thus triadic, and to notice this fact is, for the purpose of our study of comparison, illuminating.

For when we merely set pairs of objects before us, and watch their resemblances and differences, we soon lose ourselves in mazes. Yet even when the mazes are indeed not to be penetrated by any skill, still a triadic comparison is much more readily guided towards the light. "How does A differ from C?" If you

can reply to this question by saying that, by means of B, A can be altogether transformed into C, or can, at least, be brought into a close resemblance to C, then the comparison of A to C is made definite.

Let me choose still one more illustration of such a comparison. This time the illustration shall not come from the literary realm; yet it shall be more complex than is the instance of the comparison between a written word and its image in the mirror.

If you cut a strip of paper, — perhaps an inch wide and ten inches long, — you can bring the two ends together and fasten them with glue. The result will be a ring-strip of paper, whose form is of a type very familiar in case of belts, finger-rings, and countless other objects. But this form can be varied in an interesting way. Before bringing the ends of the strip together, let one end of the paper be turned 180°. Holding the twisted end of the strip fast, glue it to the other. There now results an endless strip of paper having in it a single twist. Lay side by side an ordinary

ring-strip that has no twist, and a ring-strip of paper that has been made in the way just indicated. The latter strip has a single twist in it. Hereupon ask a person who has not seen you make the two ring-strips, to compare them, and to tell you wherein they agree and wherein they differ.

To your question an ordinary observer, to whom this new form of ring-strip is unfamiliar, will readily answer that they obviously differ because one of them has no twist in it, while the other certainly has some kind of twist belonging to its structure. So far the one whom you question indeed makes use of a "third" idea. But this idea probably remains, so far, vague in his mind, and it will take your uninformed observer some time to make his comparison at all complete and explicit.

In order to aid him in his task, you may hereupon call his attention to the further fact that the ring-strip which contains the single twist has two extraordinary properties. It has, namely, but one side; and it also has but one edge. The mention of this fact will at

first perplex the uninitiated observer. But when he has taken the trouble to study the new form, he will find that the idea of a "one-sided strip of paper" enables him to compare the new and the old form, and to interpret his idea of the new ring-form to his old idea of an ordinary ring such as has no twist, and possesses two sides.

V

In all the cases of explicit comparison which we have just considered, what takes place has, despite the endless varieties of circumstance, an uniform character.

Whoever compares has before him what we have called two distinct ideas; perhaps his ideas of these two printed or written words; or again, his ideas of these two ring-strips of paper; or, in another instance, his ideas of Dante and of Shakespeare.

And the term "idea" is used, in the present discussion, in the sense which James and other representative pragmatists have made familiar in current discussion. Let us then hold

clearly in mind this definition of the term "idea." For we shall even thereby be led to note facts which will lead us beyond what this definition emphasizes.

An idea, in this sense, is a more or less practical and active process, a "leading," as James calls it, whereby some set of conceptions and perceptions tend to be brought into desirable connections. An idea may consist mainly of some effort to characterize the data of perception through the use of fitting conceptions. Or, again, an idea may be a prediction of future perceptions. Or, an idea may be an active seeking for a way to translate conceptual "bank-notes" into perceptual cash. In any one idea, either the perceptual or the conceptual elements may, at any one moment, predominate. If the conceptual element is too marked for our purposes, the idea stands in need of perceptual fulfilment. If the perceptual element is too rich for our momentary interests, the idea needs further conceptual clarification. In any case, however, according to this view, the

motives of an idea are practical, and the constituents of an idea are either the data of perception, or the conceptual processes whereby we characterize or predict or pursue such data.

But when, in Peirce's sense of the word, we have to make an explicit comparison, we have before us two distinct and contrasting ideas. It is their distinctness, it is their contrast, which determines our task. And these ideas involve, in general, not only different perceptual and different conceptual constituents, but also different and sometimes conflicting "leadings," different and sometimes mutally clashing interests, various and mutually estranged motives, activities, or constructions. These two ideas may contrast as do two forms of art. Or they may stand out the one over against the other as if they were two geometrical structures. They may collide as do two warring passions. They may first meet as simple strangers in our inner world. Their relations may resemble those of plaintiff and defendant in a suit at law. Or they may be as interestingly remote from one another as

are the spiritual realms of two great poets. In such endlessly various fashions may the two ideas come before us.

The essential fact for our present study is that, in case of the comparisons which Peirce discusses, the problem, whether you call it a theoretical or a practical problem, is not that of linking percepts to their fitting concepts, nor that of paying the bank bills of conception in the gold of the corresponding perceptions. On the contrary, it is the problem either of arbitrating the conflicts; or of bringing to mutual understanding the estrangements; or of uniting in some community the separated lives of these two distinct ideas, — of ideas which, when left to themselves, decline to coalesce or to coöperate, or to enter into one life.

This problem, in the cases of comparison with which Peirce deals, is solved through a new act. For this act originality and sometimes even genius may be required. This new act consists in the invention or discovery of some third idea, distinct from both the ideas

which are to be compared. This third idea, when once found, interprets one of the ideas which are the objects of the comparison, and interprets it to the other, or in the light of the other. What such interpretation means, the instances already considered have in part made clear. But the complexity and the significance of the processes involved require a further study. And this further study may here be centred about the question: What is gained by the sort of comparison which Peirce thus characterizes? And, since we have said that all such comparison involves an activity of interpreting one idea in the light of another, we may otherwise state our question thus: What, in these cases of comparison, is the innermost aim of the Will to Interpret which all these processes of comparison manifest?

VI

The rhythm of the Hegelian dialectic, wherein thesis, antithesis, and higher synthesis play their familiar parts, will here come to the minds of some who follow my words;

and you may ask wherein Peirce's processes of comparison and interpretation differ from those dialectical movements through division into synthesis, which Hegel long since used as the basis of his philosophy. I reply at once that Peirce's theory of comparison, and of the mediating idea or "third" which interprets, is, historically speaking, a theory not derived from Hegel, by whom at the time when he wrote these early logical papers, Peirce had been in no notable way influenced. I reply, further, that Peirce's concept of interpretation defines an extremely general process, of which the Hegelian dialectical triadic process is a very special case. Hegel's elementary illustrations of his own processes are ethical and historical. Peirce's theory of comparison is quite as well illustrated by purely mathematical as by explicitly social instances. There is no essential inconsistency between the logical and psychological motives which lie at the basis of Peirce's theory of the triad of interpretation, and the Hegelian interest in the play of thesis, antithesis, and

higher synthesis. But Peirce's theory, with its explicitly empirical origin and its very exact logical working out, promises new light upon matters which Hegel left profoundly problematic.

Returning, however, to those illustrations of Peirce's theory of comparison which I have already placed before you, let us further consider the motives which make a comparison of distinct and contrasting ideas significant for the one who compares.

An idea, as I have said, is, in James's sense, a practical "leading." An idea, if, in James's sense, successful, and if successfully employed, leads through concepts to the desirable or to the corresponding percepts. But a comparison of ideas — that, too, is no doubt an active process. To what does it lead? It leads, as we have seen, to a new, to a third, to an interpreting idea. And what is this new idea? Is it "cash," or has it only "credit-value"? What does it present to our view? What does it bring to our treasury?

One must for the first answer this question

in a very old-fashioned way. The new, the third, the interpreting idea, in these elementary cases of comparison, shows us, as far as it goes, ourselves, and also creates in us a new grade of clearness regarding what we are and what we mean. First, I repeat, the new or third idea shows us ourselves, as we are. Next, it also enriches our world of self-consciousness. It at once broadens our outlook and gives our mental realm definiteness and self-control. It teaches one of our ideas what another of our ideas means. It tells us how to know our right hand from the left; how to connect what comes to us in fragments; how to live as if life had some coherent aim. All this is indeed, thus far, very elementary information about what one gains by being able to hold three ideas at once in mind. But, in our own day, such information is important information. For our age, supposing that the contrast between perception and conception exhausts the possible types of cognitive processes, is accustomed to listen to those who teach us that self-knowledge also

must be either intuitive (and, in that case, merely fluent and transient) or else conceptual (and, in that case, abstract and sterile).

But a dual antithesis between perceptual and conceptual knowledge is once for all inadequate to the wealth of the facts of life. When you accomplish an act of comparison, the knowledge which you attain is neither merely conceptual, nor merely perceptual, nor yet merely a practically active synthesis of perception and conception. It is a third type of knowledge. It interprets. It surveys from above. It is an attainment of a larger unity of consciousness. It is a conspectus. As the tragic artist looks down upon the many varying lives of his characters, and sees their various motives not interpenetrating, but coöperating, in the dramatic action which constitutes his creation, — so any one who compares distinct ideas, and discovers the third or mediating idea which interprets the meaning of one in the light of the other, thereby discovers, or invents, a realm of conscious unity which constitutes the very essence of the life of reason.

Bergson, in his well-known portrayal, has glorified instinct in its contrast with the intellect. The intellect, as he holds, is a mere user of tools. Its tools are concepts. It uses them in its practical daily work to win useful percepts. It loves to be guided in its daily industries by rigid law. It is therefore most at home in the realm of mechanism and of death. Life escapes its devices. Its concepts are essentially inadequate. Instinct, on the contrary, so far as man still preserves that filmy cloud of luminous instinct and of intuition which, in Bergson's opinion, constitutes the most precious resource of genius, perceives, and sympathizes, and so comes in touch with reality.

That this account of the cognitive process is inadequate, both the artist and the prophets combine with the scientific observers of nature, with the mathematicians, and with the great constructive statesmen, to show us. Comparison is the instrument of what one may call, according to one's pleasure, either the observant reason, or the rational intuition

whereby the world's leading minds have always been guided. And it is comparison, it is interpretation, which teaches us how to deal with the living, with the significant, and with the genuinely real.

Darwin, for instance, as a naturalist, saw, compared, and mediated. We all know how the leading ideas of Malthus furnished the mediating principle, the third, whereby Darwin first came to conceive how the contrasting ideas with which his hypotheses had to deal could be brought into unity. And that such comparison is peculiarly adapted to deal with the phenomena of life, let not only the genesis of Darwin's ideas, but the place of the process of comparison in the development of all the organic sciences, show.

If we turn to the other extreme of the world of human achievement, in order to learn what is the sovereign cognitive process, we shall find the same answer. For let us ask, — By means of what insight did Amos the prophet meet the religious problems of his own people and of his own day? He faced tragic con-

trasts, moral, religious, and political. Warring ideas were before him, — ideas, each of which sought its own percepts, through its own concepts of God, of worship, and of success. But Amos introduced into the controversies of his time the still tragic, but inspiring and mediating, idea of the God who, as he declared, delights not in sacrifices but in righteousness. And by this one stroke of religious genius the prophet directed the religious growth of the centuries that were to follow.

Think over the burial psalm, or the Pauline chapters on Charity and the Resurrection, if you would know what part comparison and mediation play in the greatest expressions of the religious consciousness. Remember Lear or the Iliad, if you wish to recall the functions of contrast and of mediation in poetry. Let the Sistine Madonna or Beethoven's Fifth Symphony illustrate the same process in other forms of the artistic consciousness.

If once you have considered a few such instances, then, summing up their familiar

lessons, you may note that in none of these cases is it conception, in none of them is it bare perception, least of all is it inarticulate intuition, which has won for us the greatest discoveries, the incomparable treasures in science, in art, or in religion.

The really creative insight has come from those who first compared and then mediated, who could first see two great ideas at once, and then find the new third idea which mediated between them, and illumined.

We often use the word "vision" for this insight which looks down upon ideas as from above, and discovers the "third," thereby uniting what was formerly estranged. If by the word "intuition" one chooses to mean this grade of insight, then one may indeed say that creative mental prowess depends, in general, upon such intuition. But such intuition is no mere perception. It is certainly not conception. And the highest order of genius depends upon reaching the stage of Peirce's "third" type of ideas. Comparison, leading to the discovery of that which mediates

and solves, and to the vision of unity, is the psychological basis of poetry, as Shakespeare wrote, and of such prophecy as Paul praised when he estimated the spiritual gifts. Comparison, then, and interpretation constitute the cognitive function whereby we deal with life. Instinct and bare perception, left to themselves, can never reach this level.

VII

When we consider the inner life of the individual man, the Will to Interpret appears, then, as the will to be self-possessed. One who compares his own ideas, views them as from above. He aims to pass from blind "leadings" to coherent insight and to resolute self-guidance. What one wins as the special object of one's insight depends, in such cases, upon countless varying psychological conditions, and upon one's success in finding or in inventing suitable mediators for the interpretation of one idea in the light of another. It may therefore appear as if in this realm of interior comparisons, where the objects

compared are pairs of ideas, and where results of comparison consist in the invention of a third, there could be no question of attaining fixed or absolute truth. If anywhere pragmatism could be decisively victorious; if anywhere the purely relative and transient would seem in possesssion of the field, — one might suppose that comparison would constantly furnish us with instances of relative, shifting, and fluent truth.

As a fact, however, this is not the case. Comparison, which is so powerful an instrument in dealing with life, and with the fluent and the personal, is also perfectly capable of bringing us into the presence of the exact and of the necessary. All depends upon what ideas are compared, and upon the purpose for which they are compared, and upon the skill with which the vision of unity is attained.

Let the comparison of the two ring-strips of paper show what I here have in mind. The difference between a ring-strip which contains a single twist, and another which is constructed in the usual way, seems at first

sight to be both insignificant and inexact. A closer study shows that the geometry of surfaces that possess but a single side can be developed into as exact a branch of pure mathematics as you can mention. The development in question would depend upon assuming, quite hypothetically, a few simple principles which are suggested, although not indeed capable of being proved, by experience of the type which recent pragmatism has well analyzed. The branch of pure mathematics in question would consist of deductions from these few simple principles. The deductions would interpret these principles, viewed in some sort of unity and compared together.

But recent pragmatism has not well analyzed the process whereby, in pure mathematics, the consequences which follow from a set of exactly stated hypotheses are determined. This process, the genuine process of deduction, depends upon a series of ideal experiments. These experiments are performed by means of putting together ideas,

two and two, by comparing the ideas that are thus brought together, by discovering mediators, and by reading the results of the combination. This process may lead to perfectly exact results which are absolutely true.

I know of no writer who has better or more exactly analyzed the way in which such ideal experiments can lead to novel and precise results than Peirce has done. His analysis of the deductive process was first made a good while since, and anticipated results which Mr. Bertrand Russell and others have since reached by other modes of procedure.

Peirce has shown that, when you interpret your combinations of ideas through ideal experiments, using, for instance, diagrams and symbols as aids, the outcome may be a truth as exact as the ideas compared are themselves exact. It may also be in your own experience as novel a result as your ideal experiment is novel. It may also be an absolute and immutable truth.

What you discover, in a case of deduction, is not that certain conclusions are, in themselves, considered true, but that they follow from, that they are implied by, certain hypothetically assumed premises. But a discovery that certain premises imply a certain conclusion, is the discovery of a fact. This fact may be found, not by perception, nor by conception, but by interpretation. None the less, it is a fact and it may be momentous.

It is customary to imagine that such a deductive process can get out of given premises nothing novel, but only (as people often say) — only what was already present in the premises. This customary view of deduction is incorrect. As Peirce repeatedly pointed out (long before any other writer had explicitly dealt with the matter), you can write out upon a very few sheets of paper all the principles which are actually used as the fundamental hypotheses that lie at the basis of those branches of pure mathematics which have thus far been developed. Yet the logical consequences which follow from these few

mathematical hypotheses are so numerous that every year a large octavo volume in fine print is needed to contain merely the titles, and very brief abstracts, of the technical papers containing novel results which have been, during that year, published as researches in pure mathematics.

The mathematical papers in question embody, in general, consequences already implied by the few fundamental hypotheses which I have just mentioned. An infinite wealth of still unknown consequences of the same principles remains yet to be explored and stated. All of these consequences can be won, in pure mathematics, by a purely deductive procedure.

Thus endlessly wealthy, thus possessed of an inexhaustible fecundity, is the genuine deductive process. Peirce long ago showed why. And while the mathematical procedure which is in question cannot here be further discussed, it is enough for our present purpose to indicate why this fecundity of deduction exists.

VIII

Deduction, in the real life of the exact sciences, is a process that recent pragmatism has no means of describing, simply because recent pragmatism is the prey of the dual classification of the cognitive processes, and views what it calls the "workings" of ideas merely in terms of the relations between conceptions and perceptions, — between "credit-values" and "cash-values."

Pragmatism, as James defined it, regards an idea as a "leading," whereby one pursues or seeks particulars; and whereby one sometimes obtains, and sometimes fails to obtain, the "cash-values" which one aims to get. Such a doctrine has no place for the understanding of what happens when, looking down as it were from above, one compares two ideas, and looks for a mediating idea. But just this is what happens in all cases of explicit comparison.

Now in the individual case, an interpretation, a mediating idea, may come to mind

through almost any play of association, or as the result of almost any degree of skill in invention, or as the outcome either of serious or of playful combinations. In consequence, an interpretation may prove to be, in the single case, of purely relative and momentary truth and value.

But this, on the other hand, need not be the fortune of interpretation. The results of a comparison may express absolute truths, — truths which once seen can never be reversed. This absoluteness itself may be due to either one of two reasons.

In pure mathematics, a deduction, if correct at all, leads to an absolutely correct and irrevocably true discovery of a relation of implication between exactly stated premises and some conclusion. Deduction does this because deduction results from a comparison, and because the ideas compared may be, and in pure mathematics are, exact enough to suggest, at some moment, to the observant reasoner, an interpretation which, if it applies at all, applies universally to every pair of

ideas identical in meaning with the pair of ideas here compared.

The act of comparison may be momentary, and may even be as an event, an accident. The inventive watcher of his own ideas may have been led to his deduction by whatever motive you please. But the interpretation, once discovered, may nevertheless represent a truth which is absolute precisely *because* it is hypothetical. For the assertion: "P implies Q," or "If P, then Q," is an assertion about a matter of fact. And this assertion, if true at all, is always and irrevocably true about the same pair of ideas or propositions: P and Q.

Or again, the result of an interpretation may be absolutely true, because, for whatever reason, the interpretation in question counsels the one who makes the interpretation to do some determinate and individual deed. This deed may be such as to accomplish, at the moment when it is done, some ideally valuable result. But deeds once done are irrevocable. If, by interpreting your ideas in a certain way,

at a certain moment, you have been led to do a worthy deed, — then the interpretation remains as irrevocably true as the good deed remains irrevocably done.

The principle, then, relating to the value and to the truth of one's acts of interior and conscious comparison, is that they express an insight which surveys, as from above, an unity wherein are combined various ideas. These ideas, as they first come, are pragmatic leadings which may be mutually estranged, or mutually hostile, or widely contrasted, or intimately interconnected. But, whatever the ideas may have been before they were compared, — as a result of the comparison of the two ideas, one of them is interpreted in the light of the other. The interpretation may possess all the exactness of mathematics, or all the transiency of a chance observation of the play of one's inner life. It may result in Paul's vision of the charity that never faileth, ruling supreme over the contrasts and the bickerings of passing passion; or it may solve a problem of comparative natural history

or of comparative philology. Whatever the varieties of the cases in question, comparison can occur, and can reach truth, simply because we are wider than any of our ideas, and can win a vision which shall look down upon our own inner warfare, and upon our own former self-estrangements, as well as upon our own inner contrasts of exact definition. This vision observes not data of sense and not mere abstract concepts. Nor does it consist simply in our pragmatic leadings, and in their successes and failures. It observes what may interpret ideas to other ideas; as prophets and poets interpret to us what otherwise would remain, in seeming, hopelessly various and bewilderingly strange. It is not more intuition that we want. It is such interpretation which alone can enlighten and guide and significantly inspire. Upon the comparisons which thus interpret, our spiritual triumphs depend. Such triumphs are not merely the pragmatic successes of single ideas. They are the attainment of mastery over life.

IX

Our lengthy study of comparison and interpretation, as they are present in the inner life of the individual man, has prepared us for a new view of the social meaning of the Will to Interpret. Here I must once more take a temporary leave of Peirce's guidance, and trust to my own resources.

One who compares a pair of his own ideas may attain, if he is successful, that vision of unity, that grade of self-possession, which we have now illustrated. But one who undertakes to interpret his neighbor's ideas is in a different position.

In general, as we have seen, an interpreter, in his social relations with other men, deals with two different minds, neither of which he identifies with his own. His interpretation is a "third" or mediating idea. This "third" is aroused in the interpreter's mind through signs which come to him from the mind that he interprets. He addresses this "third" to the mind to which he interprets the first.

The psychology of the process of social interpretation, so far as that process goes on in the interpreter's individual mind, is identical with that psychology of comparison which we have now outlined. Nobody can interpret, unless the idea which he interprets has become more or less clearly and explicitly one of his own ideas, and unless he compares it with another idea which is, in some sense, his own.

But, from the point of view of the interpreter, the essential difference between the case where he is interpreting the mind of one of his neighbors to the mind of another neighbor, and the case wherein he is comparing two ideas of his own, is a difference in the clearness of vision which is, under human conditions, attainable.

When I compare two ideas of my own, the luminous self-possession which then, for a time, may come to be mine, forms for me an ideal of success in interpretation. This ideal I can attain only at moments. But these moments set a model for all my interpretations to follow.

When I endeavor to interpret my neighbor's mind, my interpretation has to remain remote from its goal. The luminous vision of the results of comparison comes to me, at best, only partially and with uncertainty. My neighbor's ideas I indeed in a measure grasp, and compare with other ideas, and interpret; but, as I do this, I see through a glass darkly. Only those ideas whose comparisons with other ideas, and whose resulting triadic interpretations I can view face to face, can appear to me to have become in a more intimate and complete sense my own individual ideas. When I possess certain ideas sufficiently to enable me to seek for their interpretation, but so that, try as I will, I can never clearly survey, as from above, the success of any of my attempted interpretations, — then these ideas remain, from my own point of view, ideas that never become wholly my own. Therefore these relatively alien ideas can be interpreted at all only by using the familiar hypothesis that they belong to the self of some one else. Under ordinary social conditions

this other mind is viewed as the mind of my neighbor. Neither of my neighbor nor of myself have I any direct intuition. But of my own ideas I can hope to win the knowledge which the most successful comparisons exemplify. Of my neighbor's ideas I can never win, under human conditions, any interpretation but one which remains hypothetical, and which is never observed, under these human conditions, as face to face with its own object, or with the idea of the other neighbors to whom the interpretation is addressed.

The Will to Interpret is, in our social relations, guided by a purpose which we are now ready to bring into close relations with the most significant of all the ethical ideals which, in our foregoing lectures, we have portrayed.

The interpreter, the mind to which he addresses his interpretation, the mind which he undertakes to interpret, — all these appear, in our explicitly human and social world, as three distinct selves, — sundered by chasms

which, under human conditions, we never cross, and contrasting in their inner lives in whatever way the motives of men at any moment chance to contrast.

The Will to Interpret undertakes to make of these three selves a Community. In every case of ideally serious and loyal effort truly to interpret this is the simplest, but, in its deepest motives, the most purely spiritual of possible communities. Let us view that simple and ideal community as the interpreter himself views it, precisely in so far as he is sincere and truth-loving in his purpose as interpreter.

X

I, the interpreter, regard you, my neighbor, as a realm of ideas, of "leadings," of meanings, of pursuits, of purposes. This realm is not wholly strange and incomprehensible to me. For at any moment, in my life as interpreter, I am dependent upon the results of countless previous efforts to interpret. The whole past history of civilization has

resulted in that form and degree of interpretation of you and of my other fellow-men which I already possess, at any instant when I begin afresh the task of interpreting your life or your ideas. You are to me, then, a realm of ideas which lie outside of the centre which my will to interpret can momentarily illumine with the clearest grade of vision. But I am discontent with my narrowness and with your estrangement. I seek unity with you. And since the same will to interpret you is also expressive of my analogous interests in all my other neighbors, what I here and now specifically aim to do is this: I mean to interpret you to somebody else, to some other neighbor, who is neither yourself nor myself. Three of us, then, I seek to bring into the desired unity of interpretation.

Now if I could succeed in interpreting you to another man as fully as, in my clearest moments, I interpret one of my ideas to another, my process of interpretation would simply reduce to a conscious comparison of ideas. I should then attain, as I succeeded

in my interpretation, a luminous vision of your ideas, of my own, and of the ideas of the one to whom I interpret you. This vision would look down, as it were, from above. In the light of it, we, the selves now sundered by the chasms of the social world, should indeed not interpenetrate. For our functions as the mind interpreted, the mind to whom the other is interpreted, and the interpreter, would remain as distinct as now they are. There would be no melting together, no blending, no mystic blur, and no lapse into mere intuition. But for me the vision of the successful interpretation would simply be the attainment of my own goal as interpreter. This attainment would as little confound our persons as it would divide our substance. We should remain, for me, many, even when viewed in this unity.

Yet this vision, if I could win it, would constitute an event wherein your will to be interpreted would also be fulfilled. For if you are indeed ready to accept my service as interpreter, you even now possess this will

to be interpreted. And if there exists the one to whom I can interpret you, that other also wills that you should be interpreted to him, and that I should be the interpreter.

If, then, I am worthy to be an interpreter at all, we three, — you, my neighbor, whose mind I would fain interpret, — you, my kindly listener, to whom I am to address my interpretation, — we three constitute a Community. Let us give to this sort of community a technical name. Let us call it a Community of Interpretation.

The form of such a community is determinate.

One goal lies before us all, one event towards which we all direct our efforts when we take part in this interpretation. This ideal event is a goal, unattainable under human social conditions, but definable, as an ideal, in terms of the perfectly familiar experience which every successful comparison of ideas involves. It is a goal towards which we all may work together: you, when you give me the signs that I am to interpret; our neighbor, when he

listens to my interpretation; I, when I devote myself to the task.

This goal: — Our individual experience of our successful comparisons of our own ideas shows us wherein it consists, and that it is no goal which an abstract conception can define in terms of credit-values, and that it is also no goal which a possible perception can render to me in the cash of any set of sensory data. Yet it is a goal which each of us can accept as his own. I can at present aim to approach that goal through plans, through hypotheses regarding you which can be inductively tested. I can view that goal as a common future event. We can agree upon that goal. And herewith I interpret not only you as the being whom I am to interpret, but also myself as in ideal the interpreter who aims to approach the vision of the unity of precisely this community. And you, and my other neighbor to whom I address my interpretation, can also interpret yourselves accordingly.

The conditions of the definition of our community will thus be perfectly satisfied. We

shall be many selves with a common ideal future event at which we aim. Without essentially altering the nature of our community, our respective offices can be, at our pleasure, interchanged. You, or my other neighbor, can at any moment assume the function of interpreter; while I can pass to a new position in the new community. And yet, we three shall constitute as clearly as before a Community of Interpretation. The new community will be in a perfectly definite relation to the former one; and may grow out of it by a process as definite as is every form of conscious interpretation.

Thus there can arise, in our community, no problem regarding the one and the many, the quest and the goal, the individual who approaches the goal by one path or by another, — no question to which the definition of the community of interpretation will not at once furnish a perfectly precise answer.

Such an answer will be based upon the perfectly fundamental triadic relation which is essential to every process of interpretation,

whether such process takes place within the inner life of an individual human being, or goes on in the world of ordinary social intercourse.

XI

Thus, then, if I assume for the moment the rôle of an interpreter, I can define my office, my Community of Interpretation, and my place in that community.

It will be observed that the sort of truth which, as interpreter, I seek, cannot be stated in terms as simple as those with which the current pragmatism is satisfied. My interpretation, if I offer to our common neighbor any interpretation of your mind, will of course be an idea of my own, — namely, precisely that "third" idea which I contribute to our community as my interpretation of you. And no doubt I shall desire to make as sure as I can that this idea of mine "works." But no data of my individual perception can ever present to me the "workings" which I seek.

For I want my interpretation of you to

our neighbor to be such as you would accept and also such as our neighbor would comprehend, were each of us already in the position of the ideal observer from above, whose vision of the luminous unity of my interpretation and its goal I am trying to imitate whenever I try to interpret your mind.

Thus, from the outset, the idea which I offer as my interpretation of your mind, is offered not for the sake of, or in the pursuit of, any individual or private perception of my own, either present or expected or possible. I am not looking for workings that could conceivably be rendered in my perceptual terms. I am ideally aiming at an ideal event, — the spiritual unity of our community. I can define that unity in perfectly empirical terms; because I have compared pairs of ideas which were my own, and have discovered their mediating third idea. But I do not expect to perceive that unity as any occurrence in my own individual life, or as any working of one of my own personal ideas. In brief, I have to define the truth of my interpretation

of you in terms of what the ideal observer of all of us would view as the unity which he observed. This truth cannot be defined in merely pragmatic terms.

In a community thus defined, the interpreter obviously assumes, in a highly significant sense, the chief place. For the community is one of interpretation. Its goal is the ideal unity of insight which the interpreter would possess were these who are now his neighbors transformed into ideas of his own which he compared; that is, were they ideas between which his own interpretation successfully mediated. The interpreter appears, then, as the one of the three who is most of all the spirit of the community, dominating the ideal relations of all three members.

But the one who is, in ideal, this chief, is so because he is first of all servant. His office it is to conform to the mind which he interprets, and to the comprehension of the mind to which he addresses his interpretation. And his own ideas can "work" only if his self-surrender, and his conformity to ideas

which are not his own, is actually a successful conformity; and only if his approach to a goal which, as member of a human community of interpretation, he can never reach, is a real approach.

XII

Such are the relationships which constitute a Community of Interpretation. I beg you to observe, as we close, the ethical and religious significance which the structure of such a community makes possible. In case our interpretations actually approach success, a community of interpretation possesses such ethical and religious significance, with increasing definiteness and beauty as the evolution of such a community passes from simpler to higher stages.

Upon interpretation, as we have already seen, every ideal good that we mortals win together, under our human social conditions, depends. Whatever else men need, they need their communities of interpretation.

It is indeed true that such communities

can exist, at any time, in the most various grades of development, of self-consciousness, and of ideality. The communities of interpretation which exist in the market-places of the present social world, or that lie at the basis of the diplomatic intercourse of modern nations, are communities whose ideal goal is seldom present to the minds of their members; and it is not love which often seems to be their consciously ruling motive.

Yet, on the whole, it is not perception, and it is not conception; while it certainly is interpretation which is the great humanizing factor in our cognitive processes and which makes the purest forms of love for communities possible. Loyalty to a community of interpretation enters into all the other forms of true loyalty. No one who loves mankind can find a worthier and more significant way to express his love than by increasing and expressing among men the Will to Interpret. This will inspires every student of the humanities; and is present wherever charity enters into life. When Christianity teaches us to

hope for the community of all mankind, we can readily see that the Beloved Community, whatever else it is, will be, when it comes, a Community of Interpretation. When we consider the ideal form and the goal of such a community, we see that in no other form, and with no other ideal, can we better express the constitution of the ideal Church, be that conceived as the Church on earth, or as the Church triumphant in some ideal realm of superhuman and all seeing insight, where I shall know even as I am known.

And, if, in ideal, we aim to conceive the divine nature, how better can we conceive it than in the form of the Community of Interpretation, and above all in the form of the Interpreter, who interprets all to all, and each individual to the world, and the world of spirits to each individual.

In such an interpreter, and in his community, the problem of the One and the Many would find its ideally complete expression and solution. The abstract conceptions and the mystical intuitions would be at once transcended,

and illumined, and yet retained and kept clear and distinct, in and through the life of one who, as interpreter, was at once servant to all and chief among all, expressing his will through all, yet, in his interpretations, regarding and loving the will of the least of these his brethren. In him the Community, the Individual, and the Absolute would be completely expressed, reconciled, and distinguished.

This, to be sure, is, at this point of our discussion, still merely the expression of an ideal, and not the assertion of a metaphysical proposition. But in the Will to Interpret, the divine and the human seem to be in closest touch with each other.

The mere form of interpretation may be indeed momentarily misused for whatever purpose of passing human folly you will. But if the ideal of interpretation is first grasped; and if then the Community of Interpretation is conceived as inclusive of all individuals; and as unified by the common hope of the far-off event of complete mutual understanding; and, finally, if love for this

community is awakened, — then indeed this love is able to grasp, in ideal, the meaning of the Church Universal, of the Communion of Saints, and of God the Interpreter.

Merely to define such ideals is not to solve the problems of metaphysics. But it is to remove many obstacles from the path that leads towards insight.

These ideals, however, are grasped and loved whenever one first learns fully to comprehend what Paul meant when he said: "Wherefore let him that speaketh with tongues pray that he may interpret." This word is but a small part of Paul's advice. But in germ it contains the whole meaning of the office, both of philosophy and of religion.

XIII

THE WORLD OF INTERPRETATION

LECTURE XIII

THE WORLD OF INTERPRETATION

IN the closing lecture of a course delivered a few years since, on the "Problem of Age, Growth, and Death," Professor Charles S. Minot, of Harvard University, in summarizing the results of his studies, used these words: "I do not wish to close without a few words of warning explanation. For the views which I have presented before you in this series of lectures, I personally am chiefly responsible. Science consists in the discoveries made by individuals, afterwards confirmed and correlated by others, so that they lose their personal character. You ought to know that the interpretations which I have offered you are still largely in the personal stage. Whether my colleagues will think that the body of conceptions which I have presented are fully justified or not, I cannot venture to say."

This was the word of a distinguished leader

of research in Comparative Anatomy. It expressed, in passing, a view about the general character of scientific method which the same author, not very long afterwards, set forth at much greater length in a lecture before his own section at a meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. In that lecture "On the Method of Science" Professor Minot carefully expounded, and very extensively illustrated, the thesis that, while natural science is dependent upon the experiences of individuals for every one of its advances in the knowledge of the facts of nature, no experience of any individual man can count as a scientific discovery until it has been sufficiently confirmed by other and by independent observers. Professor Minot speaks of this confirmation by fellow workers as constituting a sort of "depersonalizing" of the discoveries of each individual observer.

The thesis here in question is familiar. I cite Professor Minot's words, not as if he himself thought them at all novel, but merely in

order to bring at the moment as directly as possible to your minds what we all know to be an essential feature of the methods of natural science.

I

For my own part, I should not say, as Dr. Minot does, that the discoveries of the individual worker in a natural science "lose their personal character" by receiving the confirmation which makes them possessions of science. I think that I understand what my colleague means by calling this process a "depersonalizing" of the individual's contributions to scientific work. But I should myself prefer to express this well-known maxim of method by saying that the individual observer's discoveries have first to be interpreted to the scientific community, and then substantiated by the further experience of that community, before they belong to the science. In still other words, the work of science is what, in the athletic phrase, is called team-work. The spirit of science is one of loyalty to a Com-

munity of Interpretation. The term Community of Interpretation I here use in the technical sense defined in the foregoing lecture.

But however you choose to formulate the rule, the lesson of which it reminds us is one which concerns philosophers quite as much as it does the students of nature. Let us attempt to read this lesson, and to generalize it. We shall find it to be a lesson in metaphysics.

Our knowledge of nature depends upon experience. An experience, in order to be useful for the purposes of physical science, must involve the testing, or at all events the present success, of an idea. In this experience percepts and concepts must be brought into synthesis. Some idea about nature, as the pragmatists tell us, must be found to "work," at least in the one case which is first in question when a new natural fact is found. A scientific discovery consists in the observation of such a "working." And so far all who have learned how the study of the physical world is carried on, will agree regarding the bases of scientific knowledge.

II

Discoveries, however, are made by individuals. The individual discoverer, then, must be the one who first finds that, at a certain moment, and for him personally, concepts and percepts meet thus and thus. Some question of his is answered, and, in general, some hypothesis of his is for the moment verified. The individual observer finds that "cash" is rendered to correspond to certain "credit-values" which he has previously possessed only in conceptual form. Some interest of his in the search for percepts is, at least momentarily, fulfilled. Unless at least so much takes place in the life of somebody, science is not enriched by a new discovery.

Such, then, are the necessary conditions which must be met if a scientific advance is to take place. But are these conditions sufficient? Does every case wherein the individual finds novel "cash payment" rendered for some of his own "credit-values," and new

perceptual answers given to his conceptual questions, and "workings" crowning with at least momentary success an idea of his own about nature, — an idea which has heretofore "worked" for no other man, — does every such case involve a genuine scientific discovery? Can the individual simply turn over to his science the "cash" which his percepts have now rendered? Can he address all who are concerned thus? — "Lo, I have indeed found a new scientific fact. Scientific facts are facts of experience. I have had an experience. True ideas are ideas which 'work.' Here is an idea of mine; and this time it 'works,' for I have seen its 'working.' You want in science, not mere concepts, but percepts. I have a percept. You want, not mere credit, but cash. I have the cash; and here it is."

Is this the sole way in which the individual wins access to new scientific facts? And is this the spirit in which the trained scientific observer — for instance, the colleague whom I have just cited — reports his discoveries?

No, these conditions of a scientific discovery are necessary, but not sufficient. The individual has made his discovery; but it is a scientific discovery only in case it can become, through further confirmation, the property and the experience of the community of scientific observers. The process whereby the transition is made from the individual observation to the needed confirmation is one whose technical details, as they appear in the life of any one special science, interest us here not at all. But what does interest us, first of all, is the fact that this confirmation always involves a typical instance, or a series of instances, of Peirce's cognitive process called interpretation. What further concerns us is that this interpretation is guided by principles which are, in their bearings, both very general and highly metaphysical. One needs no other principles than these for dealing with all the central problems of philosophy.

I am far from accusing my colleague, Professor Minot, of any conscious intention to express an opinion about a problem of meta-

physics when he uttered his loyal word of warning regarding his own scientific discoveries. But none the less, this appeal to the scientific community implies a belief that there is such a community. This belief is due not to perception or to conception alone. This belief in the reality of the scientific community is itself no belief in a fact which is open to the scientific observations of any individual. No observer of nature has ever discovered, by the methods used in his or in any natural science, that there exists any such community. The existence of the community of scientific observers is known through interpretation. This interpretation expresses essentially social motives, as well as profoundly ethical motives. And this interpretation is also of a type which we are obliged to use in dealing with the whole universe.

III

Let me illustrate the thesis which I have just expressed. Let us first consider why the individual observer must await the confirmation of others before his discovery can get its

place as a contribution to a physical science. Let us use our foregoing study of the cognitive process of interpretation as a further aid towards the understanding of the relations between an individual scientific man and the work of the natural science to which he may contribute.

There is a well-known maxim of common sense which tells us that no man should be judge in his own case. The patient does ill who attempts to be his own physician. The litigant, even if he happens to be a lawyer, needs somebody besides himself as his counsel. The judge on the bench may not undertake to try a suit in which he is plaintiff or defendant. Even a great statesman needs aid when his own fitness for office is in question. The artist, however original, may be an untrustworthy critic of his own genius.

This maxim of common sense, at least in its application to patients, to litigants, to office-seekers, or to artists, seems to be somewhat remote from the maxim of scientific method which Professor Minot formulated. And yet,

in both maxims, essentially the same principle is in question. Why is a man in so many cases so poor a judge of his own case? Why ought not the most expert of judges to undertake to decide a case in which he is plaintiff or defendant? Why is it, in general, true, as they say, that the man who is his own lawyer has a fool for a client? Why is every one of us disqualified from self-estimate in respect of some of the matters which personally concern us most of all?

IV

The general answers to these questions are easy. A man's own case is usually not *merely* his own. It also concerns some social order to which he belongs. The litigant stands in presence, not merely of his own rights and wrongs, but of the whole social will. The decision of his case will affect many besides himself, and sometimes might save or wreck a nation. The patient's illness is not merely a medical phenomenon, and not merely an individual misfortune, but also is an event

of social moment. His family, and perhaps his country, may be affected by what is done with this single case. Napoleon's state of health, during the later years of his power, probably influenced the course of all future European history. And the obscurest victim of the plague may prove to be a centre of infection for a whole continent. Hence, when anybody is ill, his case is not merely his own.

When a man's affairs deeply concern other people besides himself, the only way to deal justly with the case is to interpret this man's own individual views and interests to some fitting representative of the social will, in order that the matter may be arbitrated, or in order that the wills of all concerned may be, as far as possible, both harmonized and expressed. A Community of Interpretation must exist or must be formed.

The sufferer who is ill, or the man who is haled into court, needs, then, not only to be an object of perception or of conception. It is not enough to wait in order to see whether his ideas "work" or not. What is needed is

the triadic process of mediating between his mind and some other mind, between his ideas and other men's ideas.

And no interpreter who merely blended with the mind and the ideas of the one whom he is to interpret, or with the interests of those whom he is to address, could do the work. The distinction of the persons, or of the personal functions involved, is as essential to a Community of Interpretation as is the common task in which these three persons engage, or in which these three distinct ideas or personal functions coöperate.

Now it is indeed perfectly possible for a man to undertake the task of interpreting his own case. There are instances in which we all of us wisely attempt some form of self-interpretation. There are callings, such as those of the trained administrators and of the sea-captains, in which it becomes a regular part of a man's duty, even at moments when great and novel emergencies arise, to interpret his own duty to himself.

In a previous lecture, we have seen how

such enterprises of self-interpretation are actually carried out. At some present moment, a man may interpret his past plans, his habits, his resolutions, his ideals, his obligations, to his future self, and thereupon may give commands to himself.

The psychology of such processes is simply that of comparison, when comparison is taken in Peirce's sense, as a triadic mode of cognition. In such instances a man discovers a third or mediating idea, whereby two of his own distinct ideas are, within the limits of his individual consciousness, woven into a threefold unity. Now that this can sometimes be accomplished with success, the sea-captain — who, while on the bridge, faces a great emergency and consults no other man, yet gives fitting orders and succeeds — well illustrates. The captain's task, of course, concerns the interests of a social order. But his training has prepared him to unite in his own person certain functions of a community.

From one essential feature of his self-imposed task, however, the man who acts

as his own adviser in any socially significant situation, cannot be relieved. He attempts, at such a moment, to do the work of three men at once. The three personal functions which must be brought into unity if the work is to be successfully done, remain distinct. They must not blend. If they actually blend, the whole affair becomes a blind product of instinct or of routine, and not any genuine self-direction whatever. As a fact, there are some callings which train a man for such a threefold task. There are some situations in life wherein any mature man who knows his own business has to act as his own adviser. But the task has its difficulty determined by its form. An individual has, in all such instances, to do the work of a community.

Now in case of illness, of legal peril, or of the personal estimate to which the artist or the statesman is subjected by the social will, experience shows that a man is seldom, and, in sufficiently great emergencies, is never able to act with success as his own adviser. The

reasons for this sort of defect are two: First, the question at issue concerns the interests of at least two distinct individuals; and hence, whether the patient or the litigant, or other man in question endeavors to be his own director or not, the task is essentially such that it can be accomplished only by the aid of an interpreter. For just because more than one individual must be rightly treated, there exists some social boundary which must be crossed. Therefore neither the "cash-values" nor the "credit-values" of individual ideas are mainly in question. The "exchange-values" of two distinct forms of ideal coinage are to be considered. And so the adjustment required has to be triadic in its inmost form. But secondly, while this process of interpretation, this crossing of our ideal boundary, can indeed be undertaken within the limits of an individual man's consciousness, as it is undertaken whenever we compare two distinct ideas of our own, — experience shows that the effort to fill at once the functions of three distinct persons does not succeed with

the patients and with the litigants, although analogous threefold functions may succeed in case of the sea-captains and the great administrators.

V

Let us return to the case of the scientific observer, — not because the maxim defined by my colleague is either obscure or doubtful, but because the underlying principle needs to be brought clearly to our consciousness.

Common sense regards the physical world as a realm whose objects can be experienced in common by many observers. We have not here to inquire into the origin of this special belief. But the belief can be readily illustrated by the way in which two men who row in the same boat regard the boat and the oars which they see and touch, and the water over which they fly.

Each man views the boat and the oars and the water as objects which he experiences for himself. At the same time, each of the two men believes that both of them are expe-

riencing, while they row together, the *same* external facts, — the *same* boat, the *same* oars, the *same* water.

It is important for our purposes to notice that, while each individual, as he pulls his oar, verifies some of his own ideas, and finds them "working" in his own individual experience, neither of them individually verifies the "workings" of the other man's ideas. Consequently, when each man believes that the boat in which he observes himself to be rowing is the same boat as the one which the other man also finds as an object in his own experience, — this belief, as each of the men possesses it, is *not* a perception, and is not verified by the individual "workings" of the ideas of either of the men.

This belief in the common object is, for each of the men, an interpretation, which he may address to the other man, or may regard the other as in turn addressing to him.

The cognitive process involved is through and through triadic.

The boat which each man finds, sees,

touches, and feels himself pull, appears to him as verifying his own ideas. The common boat, the boat which each man regards as an object not only for his own, but also for his neighbor's experience, is essentially an object of interpretation.

The real boat may indeed actually be what each of the two men takes it to be; and it may be the same boat as that boat which each man verifies in his own experience. But if this is the case, and if the boat is really a common object of experience for both the oarsmen, then the community of interpretation into which the two men enter whenever they talk about their boat or about their rowing, is a community which even now views both itself and its boat as it would view both of them in case its goal were actually attained, and in case the interpretation had been transformed into a perfectly clear vision of a comparison of ideas.

In any case, however, it is useless to attempt to express the community of experience which the two oarsmen possess in terms of the

separate "workings" of the ideas of either of them or of both, taken as mutually detached individuals.

Each rower verifies his own idea of the boat. Neither of them, as an individual, verifies the other's idea of this boat. Each of them, as interpreter, either of himself or of the other man, believes that their two individual experiences have a common object. Neither can (merely as this individual) verify this idea. Neither could, as an individual, ever verify his belief in the interpretation, even although they two should row in the same boat together until doomsday.

If the common interpretation is true, then the two oarsmen actually form a community of interpretation, and are even now believing what would be seen to be true if, and only if, this community of interpretation were actually to reach its goal.

Pragmatism, whose ideas, like those of the bewitched Galatians, are fain to be saved solely by their own "works," is, as I believe, quite unable to define in its own dyadic terms, the

essentially spiritual sense in which any interpretation can be true, and the sense in which any community of interpretation could reach its goal. Nothing, however, is better known to us, or is more simply empirical, than is the reaching of such a limited but determinate goal of interpretation, whenever we ourselves compare two distinct ideas of our own, and survey with clearness the union of the mediating or third idea with those whose contrasts it interprets. The oarsmen who not only row in the same boat, but who are able to talk over together their boat and their rowing, interpret their united life and work as such a real community of interpretation.

They constantly interpret themselves as the members, and their boat as the empirical object of such a community. And they constantly define what could be actually verified only if the goal of the community were reached. By merely rowing they will indeed never reach it. But does the real world anywhere or anyhow contain the actual winning

of the goal by the community? If not, then the ideas of the interpreters are actually and always quite unverifiable. Yet their community, by hypothesis, is real. But if the real world contains the actual winning of the goal by the community, then the verifying experience is not definable in the terms which pragmatism uses.

For such a goal is essentially the experience of a community; and the success, — the salvation, — the final truth of each idea, or of each individual person, that enters into this community, is due (when the goal is reached) neither to its "works" nor to its workings, but to its essentially spiritual unity in and with the community.

VI

The case of the two men rowing together in the same boat is a case in which common sense raises no question regarding the physical reality of the boat. Such a question is, for common sense, unnecessary, simply because the interpretation of the boat as the common

object of the experience of both the rowers is already made obvious by the essentially social nature and training of all of us. Our social consciousness is, psychologically speaking, the most deeply rooted foundation of our whole view of ourselves and of the world; and we therefore tend from the outset to make interpretation, rather than perception or conception, our ruling cognitive process whenever explicitly social relations are concerned. And so, for common sense, the physical objects, especially when they appear to us in the field of our experience of sight and of touch, are regarded as essentially common objects, — the same for all men. For do we not appear to see men dealing together with these common objects?

This is an interpretation; but it is an early and a natural interpretation. So long as we are untrained to reflection, we remain indeed unaware of the principles which lie at the basis of such common-sense opinions about natural facts.

These principles come to a clearer conscious-

ness only when scientific methods, or similarly critical undertakings, have made us sceptical in our scrutiny of experience.

Professor Minot's maxim expresses one result of such criticism. This maxim simply generalizes the view which the two men rowing in the boat naturally take.

VII

If physical objects are especially to be viewed as objects which are or which can become common objects of experience for various men, then whoever says, "I have discovered a physical fact," is not merely reporting the workings of his own individual ideas. He is interpreting. He is therefore appealing to a community of interpretation.

If he has found a really novel object in his own individual experience, then this object has not already won its place, as the boat and the oars and the water have long since done, among the recognized objects of common experience. If hereupon the discoverer persists, as an individual, in interpreting his

own experience; if he says, with direct confidence, "Since my ideas here work in this novel way, I have found a new physical fact," — then the discoverer is attempting to be judge in his own cause. His perils are, therefore, quite analogous to those which the patient faces who attempts to be his own physician, or to the dangers which the man encounters who enters court as his own counsel.

The source and the limitations of these perils we now know. The observer of a new fact may justly be, at least for the time, his own interpreter, in case his training has rightly prepared him for the scientific emergency of a notable discovery made by him while he is working alone. For in such a case the discoverer has already become expert in the arts of his community. Yet always the scientific discoverer is, in principle, subject to Professor Minot's maxim. Isolated observations of individuals, even when these individuals are of the highest grade of expertness, are always unsatisfactory. And the

acknowledged facts of a natural science are the possessions of the community.

That the scientific community itself exists, is therefore one of the most important principles used in the natural sciences. Often this principle is more or less subconscious. It is seldom adequately analyzed.

VIII

Our previous study has prepared us to understand the constitution of the scientific community of interpretation more precisely than would be possible without such a basis as we now possess. The scientific community consists, at the least, of the original discoverer, of his interpreter, and of the critical worker who tests or controls the discoverer's observations by means of new experiences devised for that purpose.

Usually, of course, in case the discovery has attracted much attention, the critic whose control is in question is no one individual man. For then the work of testing the discovery is done by a large body of individual workers.

In many cases, in the routine work of the highly developed sciences, the interpreter's task takes, in large part, the form of simply reporting and recording the discoverer's observations.

But Professor Minot calls attention to another and a very important part of the office of mediating between the discoverer and his community. Professor Minot speaks of the way in which scientific discoveries are "correlated" by others than those who made them. This process of correlation involves, upon its higher levels, elaborate comparisons. How complex and how significant, for the advance of science, this aspect of the process of interpretation may be, the historical instance of Clerk Maxwell's theoretical interpretation of Faraday's discoveries in Electricity and Magnetism will suggest sufficiently for our present purpose.

As for the work of criticism and of control to which the interpretation leads, it is not only capable of infinite complexity, but involves various reversals in the direction of

the process of interpretation. Criticism and control often come from those who, as in the typical case of the discoveries of Darwin, address the discoverer, and arouse him to make new discoveries.

But however complex the processes which arise in the course of such undertakings, the essential structure of the community of scientific interpretation remains definitely the same. The existence of this community is presupposed as a basis of every scientific inquiry into natural facts. And the type of truth which is sought by scientific investigators is one which indeed includes, but which simply cannot be reduced to, the dyadic type to which pragmatism devotes its exclusive attention. For everybody concerned, while he indeed aims to have his own ideas "work," is also concerned with the truth of his interpretations, and of those which are addressed to him. And such truth can be fully tested, under our human conditions, only in the cases wherein, for the interpretation of another human individual's mind, the comparison of

distinct ideas is substituted, while these ideas fall within the range of our individual insight.

In all other cases, just as in our ordinary social dealings with one another, we aim towards the goal of the community of interpretation. Our will is the "will to interpret." We do not reach the goal in any one moment, so long as we are dealing with other human beings. Yet we interpret the goal. For the goal of the community is always precisely that luminous knowledge which we do, in a limited but in a perfectly definite form, possess, within the range of our own individual life whenever our comparisons of distinct ideas are made with clearness.

We define the facts of the common social experience in terms of this perfectly concrete and empirical goal of the scientific community of interpretation. This goal is a certain type of spiritual unity. All scientific research depends upon loyalty to the cause of the scientific community of interpretation.

IX

But how — so one may still insist — should we know that any community of interpretation exists?

This question brings us indeed to the very centre of metaphysics. From this point outwards we can survey all the principal problems about reality. The will to interpret, in all of its forms, scientific or philosophical or religious, presupposes that somehow, at some time, in some fitting embodiment, a community of interpretation exists, and is in process of aiming towards its goal. Any conversation with other men, any process of that inner conversation whereof, as we have seen, our individual self-consciousness consists, any scientific investigation, is carried on under the influence of the generally subconscious belief that we all are members of a community of interpretation. When such enterprises are at once serious and reasonable and truth-loving, the general form of any such community, as we have already observed, is

that of the ideal Pauline Church. For there is the member whose office it is to edify. There is the brother who is to be edified. And there is the spirit of the community, who is in one aspect the interpreter, and in another aspect the being who is interpreted. Now what is the warrant for believing in the reality of such a community?

For a general answer to this question let us hereupon consult the philosophers. The philosophers differ sadly amongst themselves. They do not at present form a literal human community of mutual enlightenment and of growth in knowledge, to any such extent as do the workers in the field of any one of the natural sciences. The philosophers are thus far individuals rather than consciously members one of another. The charity of mutual interpretation is ill developed amongst them. They frequently speak with tongues and do not edify. And they are especially disposed to contend regarding their spiritual gifts. We cannot expect them, then, at present to agree regarding any one philosophical opinion.

Nevertheless, if we consider them in a historical way, there is one feature about their work to which, at this point, I need to call especial attention.

I have already more than once asserted that the principal task of the philosopher is one, not of perception, not of conception, but of interpretation. This remark refers in the first place to the office which the philosophers have filled in the history of culture.

X

Common opinion classes philosophy among the humanities. It ought so to be classed. Philosophers have actually devoted themselves, in the main, neither to perceiving the world, nor to spinning webs of conceptual theory, but to interpreting the meaning of the civilizations which they have represented, and to attempting the interpretation of whatever minds in the universe, human or divine, they believed to be real. That the philosophers are neither the only interpreters, nor the chiefs among those who interpret, we now well

know. The artists, the leaders of men, and all the students of the humanities, make interpretation their business; and the triadic cognitive function, as the last lecture showed, has its applications in all the realms of knowledge. But in any case the philosopher's ideals are those of an interpreter. He addresses one mind and interprets another. The unity which he seeks is that which is characteristic of a community of interpretation.

The historical proofs of this thesis are manifold. A correct summary of their meaning appears in the common opinion which classes philosophy amongst the humanities. This classification is a perfectly just one. The humanities are busied with interpretations. Individual illustrations of the historical office of philosophy could be furnished by considering with especial care precisely those historical instances which the philosophers furnish who, like Plato or like Bergson, have most of all devoted their efforts to emphasizing as much as possible one of the other

cognitive processes, instead of interpretation. For the more exclusively such a philosopher lays stress upon perception alone, or conception alone, the better does he illustrate our historical thesis.

Plato lays stress upon conception as furnishing our principal access to reality. Bergson has eloquently maintained the thesis that pure perception brings us in contact with the real. Yet each of these philosophers actually offers us an interpretation of the universe. That is, each of them begins by taking account of certain mental processes which play a part in human life. Each asks us to win some sort of touch with a higher type of consciousness than belongs to our natural human existence. Each declares that, through such a transformation of our ordinary consciousness, either through a flight from the vain show of sense into the realm of pure thought, or else through an abandonment of the merely practical labors of that user of tools, the intellect, we shall find the pathway to reality. Each in his own way interprets

our natural mode of dealing with reality to some nobler form of insight which he believes to be corrective of our natural errors, or else, in turn, interprets the supposed counsels of a more divine type of knowledge to the blindness or to the barrenness or to the merely practical narrowness of our ordinary existence.

Each of these philosophers mediates, in his own way, between the spiritual existence of those who sit in the darkness of the cave of sense, or who, on the other hand, wander in the wilderness of evolutionary processes and of intellectual theories; — he mediates, I say, between these victims of error on the one hand, and that better, that richer, spiritual life and the truer insight, on the other hand, of those who, in this philosopher's opinion, find the homeland — be that land the Platonic realm of the eternal forms of being, or the dwelling-place which Bergson loves, — where the artists see their beautiful visions of endless change.

In brief, there is no philosophy of pure con-

ception, and there is no philosophy of pure perception. Plato was a leader of the souls of those men to whom he showed the way out of the cave, and in whom he inspired the love of the eternal. Bergson winningly devotes himself to saying, as any artist says, "Come and intuitively see what I have intuitively seen."

Such speech, however, is the speech neither of the one who trusts to mere conception, nor of one who finds the real merely in perception. It is the speech of an interpreter, who, addressing himself to one form of personality or of life, interprets what he takes to be the meaning of some other form of life.

This thesis, that the philosopher is an interpreter, simply directs our attention to the way in which he is required to define his problems. And the universality of these problems makes this purely elementary task of their proper definition at once momentous and difficult. We shall not lose by any consideration which rightly fixes our attention upon an essential aspect of the process of

knowledge which the philosopher seeks to control. For the philosopher is attempting to deal with the world as a whole, with reality in general.

Why is it that the philosopher has to be an interpreter even when, like Bergson or like Plato, he tries to subordinate interpretation either to conception alone or to perception alone? Why is it that when, in his loftiest speculative flights, he attempts to seize upon some intuition of reason, or upon some form of direct perception, which shall reveal to him the inmost essence of reality, he nevertheless acts as interpreter?

The answer to this question is simple.

XI

If, as a fact, we could, at least in ideal, and as a sort of speculative experiment, weld all our various ideas, our practical ideas as well as our theoretical ideas, together into some single idea, whose "leading" we could follow wherever it led, from concept to percept, or from percept to concept; and if we could

reduce our problem of reality simply to the question, Is this one idea expressive of the nature of reality? — then indeed some such philosophy as that of Bergson, or as that of Plato, might be formulated in terms either of pure perception or of pure conception. Then the philosopher who thus welded his ideas into one idea, and who then assured himself of the success of that one idea, would no longer be an interpreter.

Thus, let us imagine that we could, with Spinoza, weld together into the one idea of Substance, the totality of ideas, that is of pragmatic leadings, which all men, at all times, are endeavoring to follow through their experience, or to express through their will. Suppose that this one idea could be shown to be successful. Then our philosophy could assume the well-known form which Spinoza gave to his own: —

By substance, Spinoza means that which is "in itself" and which needs no other to sustain or in any ideal fashion to contain it. Hereupon the philosopher finds it easy to

assert that whatever is in any sense real must indeed be either "in itself" or "in another." No other idea need be used in estimating realities except the idea thus defined. The only question as to any object is: Is this a substance or not? A very brief and simple process of conceptual development, then, brings us to Spinoza's result that whatever is "in another" is not in the highest sense real at all. Therefore there remains in our world only that which is real "in itself." The one idea can be realized only in a world which is, once for all, the Substance. The tracks of all finite creatures that are observed near the edge of the cave of this Substance lead (as was long ago said of Spinoza's substance) only inwards. The world is defined in terms of the single idea, all other human ideas or possible ideas being but special cases of the one idea. The real world is purely conceptual, and is also monistic.

Suppose, on the other hand, that we indeed recognize with Bergson, and with the pragmatists, an endless and empirical wealth of ideas

which, in practical life, lead or do not lead from concepts to percepts, as experience may determine. Suppose, however, that, with Bergson, we first notice that all these ideal leadings of the intellect constitute, at best, but an endlessly varied using of tools. Suppose that hereupon, with Bergson and with the mystics, we come to regard all this life of the varied ideas, this mechanical using of mere tools, this mere pragmatism, as an essentially poorer sort of life from which nature has long since delivered the nobler of the insects, from which the artists can and do escape, and from which it is the loftiest ideal of philosophy to liberate those who are indeed to know reality.

Then indeed, though not at all in Spinoza's way, all the ideal leadings which the philosopher has henceforth to regard as essentially illuminating, will simply blend into a single idea. This idea will be the one idea of winning a pure intuition. We shall define reality in terms of this pure intuition. And hereupon a purely perceptual view of reality will result.

If, then, all the ideas of men, if all ideas of reality, could collapse or could blend or could otherwise be ideally welded into a single idea, then this idea could be used to define reality, just as pragmatism has come to define all the endless variety of forms of "truth" in terms of the single idea which gets the name "success" or "working" or "expediency" or "cash-value," according to the taste of the individual pragmatist.

XII

As a fact, however, the genuine problem, whether of reality, or of truth, cannot be faced by means of any such blending of all ideal leadings into a single ideal leading.

We all of us believe that there is any real world at all, simply because we find ourselves in a situation in which, because of the fragmentary and dissatisfying conflicts, antitheses, and problems of our present ideas, an interpretation of this situation is needed, but is not now known to us. *By the "real world" we mean simply the "true interpretation" of this*

our problematic situation. No other reason can be given than this for believing that there is any real world at all. From this one consideration, vast consequences follow. Let us next sketch some of these consequences.

Whoever stands in presence of the problem of reality has, at the very least, to compare two essential ideas. These ideas are, respectively, the idea of present experience and the idea of the goal of experience. The contrast in question has countless and infinitely various forms. In its ethical form the contrast appears as that between our actual life and our ideal life. It also appears as the Pauline contrast between the flesh and the spirit; or as the Stoic contrast between the life of the wise and the life of fools. It is also known to common sense as the contrast between our youthful hopes and our mature sense of our limitations. The contrast between our future life, which we propose to control, and our irrevocable past life which we can never recall, presents the same general antithesis. In the future, as we hopefully view it, the goal is

naturally supposed to lie. But the past, dead as it is often said to be, determines our present need, and sets for us our ideal task.

In the world of theory the same contrast appears as that between our ignorance and our possible enlightenment, between our endlessly numerous problems and their solutions, between our innumerable uncertainties and those attainments of certainty at which our sciences and our arts aim. For our religious consciousness the contrasts between nature and grace, between good and evil, between our present state and our salvation, between God and the world, merely illustrate the antithesis.

One can also state this antithesis as that between our Will (which, as Schopenhauer and the Buddhists said, is endlessly longing) and the Fulfilment of our will. Plato, on the one hand, and the mystics on the other, attempt to conceive or to perceive some such fulfilment, according as Plato, or as some mystic, emphasizes one or the other of the two cognitive processes to which the philosophers have usually confined their attention.

This antithesis between two fundamental ideas presents to each of us the problem of the universe, and dominates that problem. For by the "real world" we mean the true interpretation of the problematic situation which this antithesis presents to us in so far as we compare what is our ideal with what is so far given to us. Whatever the real world is, its nature has to be expressed in terms of this antithesis of ideas.

Two such ideas, then, stand in contrast when we face our problem of reality. They stand as do plaintiff and defendant in court, or as do the ideas of the suffering patient and his hopes of recovery, or as do the wrongs which the litigant feels and the rights or the doom which the law allows him. The empirical shapes which the antithesis takes are simply endless in their wealth. They furnish to us the special topics which science and common sense study. But the general problem which the antithesis presents is the world-problem. *The question about what the real world is, is simply the question as to what*

this contrast is and means. Neither of the two ideas can solve its own problem or be judge in its own case. Each needs a counsel, a mediator, an interpreter, to represent its cause to the other idea.

In the well-known metaphysical expression, this contrast may be called that between appearance and reality. The antithesis itself is in one sense the appearance, the phenomenon, the world-problem. The question about the real world is that furnished to us by our experience of this appearance. When we ask what the real world is, we simply ask what this appearance, this antithesis, this problem of the two contrasting ideas both is and means. So to ask, is to ask for the solution of the problem which the antithesis presents. That is, we ask: "What is the interpretation of this problem, of this antithesis?" The real world is that solution. Every special definition of reality takes the form of offering such a solution. Whether a philosopher calls himself realist or idealist, monist or pluralist, theist or materialist, empiricist or rationalist, his

philosophy, wherever he states it, takes the form of saying: "The true, the genuine interpretation of the antithesis is such and such."

If you say that perhaps there is no solution of the problem, that hypothesis, if true, could be verified only by an experience that in itself would constitute a full insight into the meaning of the real contrast, and so would in fact furnish a solution. In any case, the real world is precisely that whose nature is expressed by whatever mediating idea is such that, when viewed in unity with the two antithetical ideas, it fully compares them, and makes clear the meaning of the contrast. *But an interpretation is real only if the appropriate community is real, and is true only if that community reaches its goal.*

In brief, then, the real world is the Community of Interpretation which is constituted by the two antithetic ideas, and their mediator or interpreter, whatever or whoever that interpreter may be. If the interpretation is a reality, and if it truly interprets the whole

of reality, then the community reaches its goal, and the real world includes its own interpreter. *Unless both the interpreter and the community are real, there is no real world.*

XIII

After the foregoing discussion of the nature and the processes of interpretation, we are now secure from any accusation that, from this point of view, the real world is anything merely static, or is a mere idea within the mind of a finite self, or is an Absolute that is divorced from its appearances, or is any merely conceptual reality, or is "out of time," or is a "block universe," or is an object of a merely mystical intuition.

Interpretation, as we have seen in our general discussion of the cognitive process in question, demands that at least an infinite series of distinct individual acts of interpretation shall take place, unless the interpretation which is in question is arbitrarily interrupted. If, then, the real world contains the Community of Interpretation just characterized, this com-

munity of interpretation expresses its life in an infinite series of individual interpretation, each of which occupies its own place in a perfectly real order of time.

If, however, this community of interpretation reaches its goal, this whole time-process is in some fashion spanned by one insight which surveys the unity of its meaning. Such a viewing of the whole time-process by a single synopsis will certainly not be anything "timeless." It will not occur, on the other hand, at any one moment of time. But its nature is the one empirically known to us at any one moment when we clearly contrast two of our own ideas and find their mediator.

XIV

Nothing is more concretely known to us than are the nature, the value, and the goal of a community of interpretation. The most ideal as well as the most scientifically exact interests of mankind are bound up with the existence, with the purposes, with the fortunes, and with the unity of such communities.

The metaphysical doctrine just set forth in outline can be summed up thus: The problem of reality is furnished to us by a certain universal antithesis of two Ideas, or, if one prefers the word, by the antithesis of two Selves. The first thesis of this doctrine is that Reality — the solution of this problem — is the interpretation of this antithesis, the process of mediating between these two selves and of interpreting each of them to the other. Such a process of interpretation involves, of necessity, an infinite sequence of acts of interpretation. It also admits of an endless variety within all the selves which are thus mutually interpreted. These selves, in all their variety, constitute the life of a single Community of Interpretation, whose central member is that spirit of the community whose essential function we now know. In the concrete, then, the universe is a community of interpretation whose life comprises and unifies all the social varieties and all the social communities which, for any reason, we know to be real in the empirical world which our social and our historical

sciences study. The history of the universe, the whole order of time, is the history and the order and the expression of this Universal Community.

XV

The method by which this doctrine has been reached may also be summarily stated thus: We began with a sketch of the essentially social character which belongs to our human knowledge of the physical world. Here one of our guides was the way in which common sense interprets the being of material objects. Our other guide was the maxim of scientific method which Professor Minot, wholly without any technically metaphysical purpose, has stated. The result of regarding our human experience of nature from these two points of view was that we found our belief in the reality of the physical world to be inseparable from our belief in the reality of a community of interpretation. The rest of our discussion has been a metaphysical generalization of this first result.

Turning from these special instances to the general philosophical problem of reality, we next noticed the historical fact that philosophers have never been able to define a theory of the universe in purely conceptual terms, and have been equally unable to state their doctrines about the world in purely perceptual terms. The philosophers have always been interpreters, in our technical sense of that term.

Is this limitation of the philosophers (if you call it a limitation) due to the fact that they have been, themselves, human beings, busied with interpreting life to their fellowmen, and unable therefore to dwell exclusively either upon perception or upon conception?

To this question we have answered that the philosopher's office as interpreter is not forced upon him merely by the fact that he is appealing, as man, to other men. The source of his task as interpreter lies deeper. Reality cannot be expressed exclusively either in perceptual or in conceptual form. Nor can its nature be described in terms of the "lead-

ings" which any one idea can express. However you attempt to weld all ideas into one idea (such as Spinoza's idea of substance), and then to hold that reality is the expression of this one idea, you stand in presence of a contrast, an antithesis of at least two ideas, "Appearance and Reality," "Actual and Possible," "Real and Ideal," or some other such pair. If you succeed in reducing this antithesis to its simplest statement, the world-problem then becomes the problem of defining the mediating idea in terms of which this contrast or antithesis can be and is interpreted. If you define, however tentatively, such a mediating idea, and then offer the resulting interpretation as an account of what the real world is, your philosophy becomes an assertion that the universe itself has the form and the real character of a community of interpretation. You have no reason for believing that there is any world whatever, except a reason which implies that some interpretation of the antithesis both exists and is true. A real and a true interpretation occur only in case the cor-

responding community exists and wins its goal.

In brief, if any single idea endeavors to define in terms of its own "leadings" the whole nature of things, that idea is in the position of the man who undertakes to be judge of his own cause. For it belongs to the nature of things to involve an interpretation of its own contrasts, and a mediation of its own antitheses. To the world, then, belongs an Interpreter of its own life. In this sense, then, the world is the process and the life of the Spirit and of the Community.

XIV

THE DOCTRINE OF SIGNS

LECTURE XIV

THE DOCTRINE OF SIGNS

THE Christian doctrine of life is dominated by the ideal of the Universal Community. Such was the thesis defended in the first part of this series of lectures. The real world itself is, in its wholeness, a Community. This was the metaphysical result in which our study of the World of Interpretation, at the last time, culminated.

I

Herewith the two assertions to which our study of the Problem of Christianity leads, are before you. Our concluding lectures must make explicit the relations between these two assertions. Hereby each of them will be interpreted in the light of the other.

Metaphysical theory and religious experience are always contrasting realms of inquiry and of insight. Therefore the task of our three concluding lectures constitutes a typical exer-

cise in the process of interpretation. We have to compare results which have been reached by widely different methods. We have to mediate between them. The method of interpretation is always the comparative method. To compare and to interpret are two names for the same fundamental cognitive process.

The fitting order for such an enterprise is determined by the subject-matter. Since the metaphysical thesis with which our last lecture closed is very general, it will prove to be, indeed, a worthless abstraction, unless we illustrate its application to various special problems of life as well as of philosophy. What I can hope, within the limits of our brief remaining time, to make clearer, is what I may call the ground plan of the World of Interpretation.

The universe, if my thesis is right, is a realm which is through and through dominated by social categories. Time, for instance, expresses a system of essentially social relations. The present interprets the past to the future. At each moment of time the results of the whole world's history up to that moment

are, so to speak, summed up and passed over to the future for its new deeds of creation and of interpretation. I state this principle here in a simply dogmatic form, and merely as an example of what I have in mind when I say that the system of metaphysics which is needed to define the constitution of this world of interpretation must be the generalized theory of an ideal society. Not the Self, not the Logos, not the One, and not the Many, but the Community will be the ruling category of such a philosophy.

I must attempt, then, within our brief remaining time, to make this general metaphysical theory less abstract and more articulate. I must contrast our theory with others. I must make more explicit its relation to the Christian ideas. And then I must, in conclusion, survey what we have won, and summarize the outcome.

II

Let me begin by a few purely technical formulations. Charles Peirce, in the discussions which we have now so freely used, introduced into logic the term "Sign." He

used that term as the name for an object to which somebody gives or should give an interpretation. I have not here to deal, at any length, with Peirce's development of his theory of Signs. His doctrine was, as you will recall, not at first stated as the basis for a metaphysical system, but simply as a part of a logical theory of the categories. My own metaphysical use of Pierce's doctrine of signs, in my account of the World of Interpretation at the last time, is largely independent of Peirce's philosophy. For the moment it is enough to say that, according to Peirce, just as percepts have, for their appropriate objects, individually existent Things; and just as concepts possess, for their sole objects, Universals, —so interpretations have, as the objects which they interpret, Signs. In its most abstract definition, therefore, a Sign, according to Peirce, is something that determines an interpretation. A sign may also be called an expression of a mind; and, in our ordinary social intercourse, it actually is such an expression. Or again, one may say that a sign

is, in its essence, either a mind or a quasi-mind, — an object that fulfils the functions of a mind.

Thus, a word, a clock-face, a weather-vane, or a gesture, is a sign. Our reason for calling it such is twofold. It expresses a mind, and it calls for an interpretation through some other mind, which shall act as mediator between the sign, or between the maker of the sign, and some one to whom the sign is to be read.

Since an interpretation of a sign is, in its turn, the expression of the interpreter's mind, it constitutes a new sign, which again calls for interpretation; and so on without end; unless the process is arbitrarily interrupted. So much can be asserted as a purely logical thesis, quite apart from metaphysics. A sign, then, is an object whose being consists in the fact that the sign calls for an interpretation.

The process of interpretation, as it occurs in our ordinary social life, sufficiently illustrates the meaning of Peirce's new term. Peirce insists that the signs, viewed simply from a logical point of view, constitute a new and

fundamentally important category. He sets this category as a "third," side by side with the classic categories of the "universals" which form the "first" category, and the "individuals," which, in Peirce's logic, form the "second" category.

Peirce, as I have said, is not responsible for the metaphysical theory about the world of interpretation with which our last lecture closed. But his terminology enables us to summarize that theory by stating our own metaphysical thesis thus: "The universe consists of real Signs and of their interpretation."

In the order of real time the events of the world are signs. They are followed by interpreters, or by acts of interpretation which our own experience constantly exemplifies. For we live, as selves, by interpreting the events and the meaning of our experience. History consists of such interpretations.

These acts of interpretation are, in their turn, expressed, in the order of time, by new signs. The sequence of these signs and interpretations constitutes the history of the

universe. Whatever our experience exemplifies, our metaphysical doctrine of signs generalizes, and applies to the world at large.

The world's experience is, from this point of view, not merely a flux. For, as Bergson rightly asserts, the world of any present moment of time is a summary of the results of all past experience. This view of Bergson's, however, is no mere intuition, but is itself an interpretation. Our own metaphysical thesis states in terms of interpretation what Bergson states as if it were a result of simple intuition.

Since any idea, and especially any antithesis or contrast of ideas, is, according to our metaphysical thesis, a sign which in the world finds its real interpretation, our metaphysical theory may be called a "doctrine of signs."

The title which I have given to this lecture serves to direct attention, through the use of a purely technical term, to the main issue. This issue is the one presented by the thesis that the very being of the universe consists in a process whereby the world is interpreted, — not indeed in its wholeness, at any one

moment of time, but in and through an infinite series of acts of interpretation. This infinite series constitutes the temporal order of the world with all its complexities. The temporal order is an order of purposes and of deeds, simply because it is of the essence of every rational deed to be an effort to interpret a past life to a future life; while every act of interpretation aims to introduce unity into life, by mediating between mutually contrasting or estranged ideas, minds, and purposes. If we consider the temporal world in its wholeness, it constitutes in itself an infinitely complex Sign. This sign is, as a whole, interpreted to an experience which itself includes a synoptic survey of the whole of time. Such is a mere sketch of our doctrine of the world of interpretation.

III

I may aid towards a further understanding of our metaphysical thesis by using, at this point, an illustration.

When you observe, at a crossing of roads,

a sign-post, you will never discover what the real sign-post is, either by continuing to perceive it, or by merely conceiving its structure or its relations to any perceived objects, or to any merely abstract laws in heaven or in earth. Nor can you learn what the sign-post is by any process of watching in the course of your individual experience the "workings" of any ideas that it suggests to you as this individual man. You can understand what the sign-post is only if you learn to read it. For its very being as a sign-post consists in its nature as a guide, needing interpretation, and pointing the way. To know the real sign-post, you must then learn to interpret it to a possible hearer to whom you address your interpretation. This being to whom you address your interpretation must be a self distinct from your individual self. If, then, the sign-post is a sign-post at all, there are beings in the world that are neither individual objects of perception nor yet beings such that they are mere universals, — the proper objects for conception.

If the sign-post is a real sign-post, there is in the world a community constituted of at least three distinct minds. There is, first, the mind whose intention to point out the way is expressed in the construction of this sign-post. There is the mind to which the sign-post actually points out the way. But the sign-post does not effectively point out the way to anybody unless, either by the aid of his own individual memory, or of somebody who helps him to read the sign, he learns what the sign means. There must then be a third mind which interprets the sign-post to the inquiring wayfarer. The wayfarer, if he knows how to read, may be his own interpreter. But there remain the three distinct mental functions. There is the function of the mind whose purpose the sign expresses; there is the mind which is guided by the interpretation of the sign; and there is the function of the interpreter to whom the reading of the sign is due. All these minds or functions must be real and distinct and must form one real community, if indeed the sign-post is a real sign-post at all.

This illustration may help us to grasp what the first thesis of our metaphysical doctrine means. Our experience, as it comes to us, is a realm of Signs. That is, the facts of experience resemble sign-posts. You can never exhaustively find out what they are by resorting either to perception or to conception. Nor can you define experience merely in terms of the sort of knowledge which pragmatism emphasizes. No "working" of any single idea can show what a real fact of experience is. For a fact of experience, as you actually view that fact, is first an event belonging to an order of time, — an event preceded by an infinite series of facts whose meaning it summarizes, and leading to an infinite series of coming events, into whose meaning it is yet to enter. But the past and future of our real experience are objects neither of pure perception nor of pure conception. Nor can you, at any present moment, verify any present idea of yours about any past event. Nor can you define past and future in terms of the present workings of any ideas. Past

time and future time are known solely through interpretations. Past time we regard as real, because we view our memories as signs which need and possess their interpretations. Our expectations are interpreted to our future selves by our present deeds. Therefore we regard our expectations as signs of a future.

Therefore, to a being who merely perceived and conceived, or who lived wholly in the present workings of his ideas, past time and future time would be as meaningless as the sign-post would be to the wayfarer who could not read, and who found nobody to interpret to him its meaning. If the past and future are realities, then they constitute a life which belongs to some real community, whose ideas of past and of future are really interpreted.

Now our doctrine of the world of interpretation extends to all reality the presuppositions which we use in all our dealings with past and future time. Our memories are signs of the past; our expectations are signs of the future. Past and future are real in so far as these signs have their real interpretation.

Our metaphysical thesis generalizes the rules which constantly guide our daily interpretations of life. All contrasts of ideas, all varieties of experience, all the problems which finite experience possesses, are signs. The real world contains (so our thesis asserts) the interpreter of these signs, and the very being of the world consists in the truth of the interpretation which, in the whole realm of experience, these signs obtain.

Let us turn back from these technical formulations and from these illustrations, and come again closer to the real life for which they are intended to stand.

IV

Despite my frequent mention of differences, there is one respect in which I am in full agreement with the spirit of pragmatism, as James defined it. Any metaphysical thesis, if it has a meaning at all, is the expression of an attitude of the will of the one who asserts this thesis.

In a remarkable recent book, entitled:

"Die Philosophie des Als Ob," Vaihinger has given his own formulation to a view which he originally reached independently of the influence of pragmatism. It is the view that a philosophy is, in its essence, a resolution to treat the real world as if that world possessed certain characters, and as if our experience enabled us to verify these characters. This resolution is, in its essence, an active attitude of the will. Therefore Voluntarism must form an essential part of every philosophy which justly interprets our metaphysical interests. For our metaphysical interests are indeed interests in directing our will, in defining our attitude towards the universe, in making articulate and practical our ideals and our resolutions. So far, I say, Vaihinger and the pragmatists are right.

I do not believe, however, that our voluntarism must remain a *mere* pragmatism. I have long defended a philosophy, both of human life and of the universe, which I have preferred to call an "Absolute Voluntarism." I developed such a philosophy, partly under

the influence of James, but long before recent pragmatism was in question. In its most general form, this philosophy to which I myself adhere, asserts that, while every metaphysical theory is the expression of an attitude of the will, there is one, and but one, general and decisive attitude of the will which is the right attitude, when we stand in presence of the universe, and when we undertake to choose how we propose to bear ourselves towards the world. Any philosophy is inevitably a doctrine which counsels us to bear ourselves towards our world *as if* our experience were such and such. But I do not believe that the "Philosophy of the 'As if'" is, as Vaihinger asserts, merely a system of more or less convenient fictions. For if there are absolute standards for the will (and, in my own opinion, there are such standards), then the world of the will is no world of fictions. If there is one, and but one, right attitude of the will towards the universe, this attitude, when once assumed, is essentially creative of its own realm of deeds. Its so-called fictions are,

therefore, not mere fictions, for they constitute a real life. Its so-called successes are no merely transient successes. For if there is any true success at all, every such success, however petty it seems, has a world-wide meaning. The realm of true success is not merely a world of change. For deeds once done are irrevocable; and every deed echoes throughout the universe. The past is unchanging. The expression of the will constitutes itself an actual life. The creative activity of the will is therefore no mere play with figments. It has the reality of a realm of deeds. And every deed has a value that extends throughout the world of the will. Each act is to be judged in the light of the principle: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these."

I do not wish here to dwell upon the general features which I have repeatedly ascribed to this world of the will, where every fact is the expression of an individual decision, and is therefore an absolute fact. I do not intend to repeat even the outlines of my former state-

ments, both of this absolute voluntarism and of my own type of idealism. I have too often told that tale. So far as possible, I wish, in the present exposition, to speak as if all my former words were unspoken.

As a fact, I still hold by all the essential features of these former attempts to state the case for idealism. But at present I am dealing with the World of Interpretation, and with the metaphysics of the Community. This I believe to be simply a new mode of approach to the very problems which I have formerly discussed.

My present interest lies in applying the spirit of my absolute voluntarism to the new problems which our empirical study of the Christian ideas, and our metaphysical theory of interpretation, have presented for our scrutiny.

With this, then, as the end now in view, let me try to tell you what attitude of will, what practical bearing towards the universe, what resolution, what plan of life, should characterize, in my opinion, any one who undertakes to view the world in the light of that doctrine

concerning the nature and the business of interpretation, which, at the last time, I sketched.

This essentially social universe, this community which we have now declared to be real, and to be, in fact, the sole and supreme reality, — the Absolute, — what does it call upon a reasonable being to do? What kind of salvation does it offer to him? What interest does it possess for his will? If he accepts such a view of things, how should he bear himself towards the problem of life? To what ideas of his own does such a view offer success? How can he bring such a view into closer relations with ordinary human experience?

V

James declared that the typical pragmatist is a man of an essentially dramatic temper of mind. I now have to point out that the believer in our world of interpretation also centres his interests about a genuinely dramatic undertaking.

I have already said that the world of interpretation includes an infinite series of acts of interpretation. I have shown, in an earlier lecture, that every act of interpretation involves novelty. The believer in this doctrine of signs, the one to whom every problem, every antithesis, every expression of mind, every tragedy of life, is a sign calling for interpretation, and in whose belief the world contains its own interpreter, both contemplates and shares in a world drama. But the attitude of will which befits one who holds this doctrine of signs can only be rightly understood in case we first distinguish three very general attitudes of the will with which, in certain of their special forms, we have now become well acquainted. Our will is always dramatic in its expressions. It passes from deed to deed. Its world is a world of sequences and of enterprises. But when it surveys this world, and when it summarizes the spirit of its undertakings, the will may assume any one of three distinct modes of appreciating both itself and its realm of actual or of possible deeds.

VI

The first of these modes, the first of the attitudes of the will to which I here direct your attention, is that to which Schopenhauer gave the name, "The Affirmation of the Will to live." This phrase of Schopenhauer is intended by its author to be extremely general, and to apply to active dispositions which are exemplified by all sorts and conditions of men. Whatever the natural man seeks, he intends, says Schopenhauer, to live if he can. And when the natural man affirms this will to live, he may have in mind any one of countless different, or even conflicting, motives and purposes.

He may be seeking pleasure, wealth, power, praise, material possessions, or manifold spiritual goods. He may call it righteousness or food, that he desires. It may be the destruction of his enemies or the prosperity of his friends that he has in mind when he sets out towards his goal. He may be of any calling that you please. He may be a world-

ling or a recluse; a beggar or a king; an outcast or the centre of an admiring company. In brief, his special purposes may vary as you will. The ideas, the "leadings," which, in the pragmatic sense, he desires to have succeed, may vary from man to man and from life to life, throughout the whole range of our social and individual objects of desire.

But, in any case, if, in Schopenhauer's sense, such a man affirms the will to live, he essentially desires to be himself, whoever he may be, and to win his aims, whatever the special aims be to which he commits himself. This desire for self-assertion, then, is present in all the Protean shapes of the affirmation of the will to live, and vivifies them.

While one affirms the will to live, he therefore gives himself over to the great game of life. As an individual man he has his friends and his enemies; his triumphs and defeats; his joys and his sorrows of pain and grief. But what happens to him does not, in so far, touch the heart and core of his will. He may shout with triumph, or cry aloud in his woe;

he may pray to his gods for help, or may curse his fate in what he calls his despair; but withal, he means to continue his pursuit of the objects of desire. He may repent of his sins; but not of being himself. He may, in his hatred of ill-fortune, resort even to suicide. But such suicide is merely a revolt against disaster. It only affirms in its own passionate way the longing for some life which is not indeed the present life of the rebel who seeks suicide, but which, in all his condemnation of his own deeds or of his own misadventures, he still longs to live, if only death and the universe will yet permit him to express himself.

VII

Schopenhauer usually emphasizes the essentially selfish nature of this will to live, as it inspires the individual man. Yet Schopenhauer fully recognizes that we are all social beings, and that the will to live can keep us eagerly busy in and with the world of our fellows. Only, as Schopenhauer rightly in-

terprets this affirmation of the will to live, the recognition of his fellow-men which the victim of this will to live constantly makes, is based, so to speak, upon the natural solipsism of the individual will.

And here we come to the very root, the inmost meaning, of this first of the three attitudes of the will which we are here considering.

One who thus, in Schopenhauer's sense, affirms the will to live, may cheerfully and sincerely acknowledge that other men exist, and he may be a good member of society. But he tends to found this acknowledgment of his fellow-man, and of the social will, upon what most philosophers regard as an argument from analogy. A man may, by reason of such analogy, extend the realm to which his will to live applies its interests. The early and purely natural forms of family loyalty and of clan loyalty depend upon such practical expansions of the self. But, as we saw when we studied the Pauline doctrine of original sin, the will to live constantly meets

its opponent in the wills of other individuals. And then its primal solipsism revives; and it hates its fellows. And even when such a will recognizes that an organized social will is in some sense a reality, it finds this social will either as a foreign fact, or as a mystery.

In brief, all the social facts seem to a man in whom Schopenhauer's will to live finds its natural affirmation, external and in general problematic, — known only through analogy and doubtfully. I will my own life; and observe my own life. My dealings with you seem, from this point of view, to be due to motives external to this will of mine.

"Why," says Professor James, addressing a supposed fellow-man in one of his essays on Radical Empiricism, "Why do I postulate your mind? Because I see your body acting in a certain way. Its gestures, facial movements, words, and conduct generally are 'expressive,' so I deem it actuated, as my own is, by an inner life like mine. This argument from analogy is my *reason*, whether an instinctive belief runs before it or not. But

what is 'your body' here but a percept in *my* field? It is only as animating *that* object, *my* object, that I have any occasion to think of you at all."

In the form of this familiar argument from analogy, — an argument which many philosophers indeed regard as expressing our principal reason for believing that our neighbors' minds are realities, — James also puts into words an equally familiar aspect of the metaphysical view which naturally accompanies this affirmation of the will to live. I perceive my own inner life, or, at all events, my own facts of perception. By analogy I extend the world thus primarily known to me. Other men are, in this way, hypothetical extensions of myself. For the rest, I believe in them because, unless I take due account of them, they snub or thwart my own will to live. My ideas are my own, and it is of the essence of my life as this individual that I want my own ideas to "work." Upon this affirmation of my will to live depends all the truth that I shall ever come to know.

Pragmatism, in its recent forms, is indeed one of the most effective philosophical expressions which Schopenhauer's "Will to live" has ever received. Pragmatism is fond of insisting upon its cordial and unquestionably sincere recognition both of the social world and of the real existence of many selves, and of countless distinct ideas.

But as a fact, this recognition of the many selves, of the real world, and of the infinite variety of ways in which different ideas obtain now one and now another "working," — this entire view of truth and of reality, — when pragmatism deals with such matters, is founded upon the view that (as James loved to say) all "workings" are "particular." Each idea aims at accomplishing the event which, if reached, then and there constitutes the truth of that particular idea. Each idea therefore expresses and, as far as it can, affirms its own will to live. Each idea aims at its own success. Ideas, like all the other facts of James's world, hang together, as James was accustomed to say, "by the edges,"

if indeed they hang together at all. Their unities are temporary, accidental, and non-essential. The world of truth is thus indeed a dramatic world where each idea asserts itself while it can.

The life of truth is a drama wherein each pragmatic "leading," each individual expression of the will to succeed, "struts and frets its hour upon the stage, and then is heard no more."

Such is the philosophy wherein Schopenhauer's affirmation of the will to live finds its most recent, and, on the whole, as I suppose, its most effective expression.

VIII

In strong contrast to the affirmation of the will to live, Schopenhauer placed that attitude which he defined as the resignation, — the denial of the will to live. Here we have to deal with a tendency too well known to all students of the history of the spiritual life to need, in this place, extended portrayal, and too simple in its fascinating contrast

with our natural life to require minute analysis. This is the attitude of the will which Southern Buddhism taught as the sole and sufficient way of salvation. In the form of saintly resignation the same ideal has received countless Christian expressions. Repeatedly this form of self-denial has been supposed to constitute the essence of Christianity. Repeatedly the expounders and defenders of the Christian doctrine of life have been obliged to insist that the Christian form of salvation does *not* consist in this simple abandonment of the will to live. I will not here repeat the tale which the greatest work of Christianity throughout the ages has so freely illustrated. Resignation alone does not save. To abandon his will to live does not by itself enable the individual to win the true goal of life. Let us, for the moment, simply accept this fact.

But since we are here interested in the metaphysical relations of these attitudes of the will, let us mention, in passing, that the resignation of the will to live is an attitude

to which there correspond appropriate forms of metaphysical opinion. Here, again, the connections are well known, and need not here be dwelt upon. It is enough to say that whoever abandons the will to live, ceases, of course, to be interested in those "workings" of ideas which pragmatism regards as bringing us into empirical and momentary touch with the real. To such a resigned will, there remain only the cognitive processes of pure conception and of pure perception to consider. On the whole, in the history of thought those for whom salvation consists in the denial of the will to live have resorted to the metaphysics of pure perception, and have been mystics.

As has now been repeatedly pointed out by his critics, Bergson's philosophy consists of two parts, — a pragmatism which he regards as always incomplete and unsatisfactory, and a mysticism which, as he more fully expresses himself, he tends to make more prominent. The corresponding attitudes of the will also play their part, both in Bergson's cosmology and in his metaphysics. On the whole, Berg-

son thus far emphasizes the joyous aspect of his own philosophy of life. But plainly, in his view, the evolutionary process has been dominated by the will to live. And the inevitable outcome of such a domination, so long as the will to live takes the form which Schopenhauer and Bergson ascribe to it, is the discovery that such a realm of mere vital impulse is vanity, and vexation of spirit. Whenever the mysticism of Bergson is fully developed, by himself or by his followers, there will come to be expressed the corresponding attitude of the will. The vital impulse will be transformed into resignation; as Bergson's insistence upon free activity has already been subordinated to his counsel that we should give ourselves over to mere perception. When he tells us that the true artist perceives "for the sake of nothing, for the mere pleasure of perceiving," we remember Schopenhauer's saint, for whom "This our so real world, with all its suns and its milky ways," became "Nothing." Such, in fact, is the end of the mystic.

IX

But there is indeed a third attitude of the will. It is not Schopenhauer's attitude of the affirmation of the will to live. It is also not the other attitude which Schopenhauer believed to be the sole and sufficient salvation of the will. And this third attitude of the will possesses its appropriate metaphysics.

As for what this attitude of the will is, — when we consider, not its doctrine of the universe, but its doctrine of life, — we are already well acquainted with it, because our entire discussion of the Christian ideas was devoted to making us familiar with its moral and its religious meaning. In returning, at this point, to the mention of this attitude of the will, I do so because we now are ready to understand the relation between this type of will, and the metaphysical doctrine of which I believe it to be the fitting accompaniment. Whoever has learned to understand the meaning of this third way in which the will can bear itself towards its world, will therefore

be better prepared to grasp the foundations upon which the metaphysics of interpretation rests. The human value of this practical attitude does not by itself fully reveal the grounds of the technical theory which is here in question. But the intimate relations between theory and life are nowhere more pronounced than in this case, where reason and sentiment, action and expression, throw light, each upon the other, as is hardly anywhere else the case.

The attitude of the will which Paul found to be saving in its power, just as, to his mind, it was also divine in its origin, was the attitude of Loyalty. Now loyalty, when considered from within, and with respect to its deepest spirit, is not the affirmation of the will to live of which Schopenhauer spoke. And loyalty is also not the denial of the will to live. It is a positive devotion of the Self to its cause, — a devotion as vigorous, as self-asserting, as articulate, as strenuous, as Paul's life and counsels always remained. The apostle himself was no resigned person.

His sacrifices for his cause were constant, and were eloquently portrayed in his own burning words. They included the giving of whatever he possessed. But they never included the negation of the will, the plucking out of the root of all desire, in which Gotama Buddha found salvation. Paul died at his conversion; but only in order that henceforth the life of the spirit should live in him and through him.

X

Now this third attitude of the will, as we found in dealing with the whole Christian doctrine of life, has in any case its disposition to imagine, and also practically to acknowledge as real, a spiritual realm, — an universal and divine community. Christian theology, in its traditional forms, was a natural outcome of the effort to define the world wherein the loyal will can find both its expression and its opportunity. We have not now to consider the religious aspect of this third attitude of the will. But we are now fully prepared to

state its relation to the metaphysical problems. All the threads are in our hands. We have only to weave them into a single knot.

As a reasonable being, when once I have come to realize the meaning of my dealings both with life and with the world, the first practical principle, as well as the first theoretical presupposition of my philosophy must be this: Whatever my purposes or my ideas, — whatever will to live incites me to create and to believe, whatever reverses of fortune drive me back upon my own poor powers, whatever problems baffle me, through their complexity and my ignorance, one truth stands out clear: Practically I cannot be saved alone; theoretically speaking, I cannot find or even define the truth in terms of my individual experience, without taking account of my relation to the community of those who know. This community, then, is real whatever is real. And in that community my life is interpreted. When viewed as if I were alone, I, the individual, am not only doomed to failure, but I am lost in folly.

The "workings" of my ideas are events whose significance I cannot even remotely estimate in terms of their momentary existence, or in terms of my individual successes. My life means nothing, either theoretically or practically, unless I am a member of a community. I win no success worth having, unless it is also the success of the community to which I essentially and by virtue of my real relations to the whole universe, belong. My deeds are not done at all, unless they are indeed done for all time, and are irrevocable. The particular fortunes upon which James lays so much stress are not even particular, unless they consist of individual events which either occur or do not occur. Each of these real events has therefore a being which lasts to the end of time, and a value which concerns the whole universe.

Such, I say, is the principle, at once theoretical and practical, upon which my philosophy must depend. This principle does not itself depend upon the momentary success of any individual idea. For it is a principle in

terms of which we are able to define whatever real life there is, while, unless this principle itself holds true, there is no real life or real world in which we can find success.

XI

Now this principle is one which, with various dialectical explanations, I have, in other essays of my own, repeatedly defended. And, as I have said, I have no wish whatever to repeat, in this context, my own previous discussions. The relation of this essentially social attitude of the decisive will to the doctrine of the community, leads me to show what this general and underlying attitude of the social will is, by mentioning, as I pass, and by way of illustration, that most familiar and most profoundly metaphysical of the problems of common sense, the problem: What reason can any one of us give for holding that the mind of his neighbor is real at all? For the attitude of will, the postulate, the resolution which any one of us takes when he says to his fellow, "You are a real being," is precisely that atti-

tude which our metaphysical thesis advises us to take towards the whole world when it tells us to say to the world: "I know that you are real, because my life needs and finds its interpreter. You, O World, are the interpretation of my existence."

At all events, the case of the bases of our ordinary social knowledge is a test case deciding the whole attitude towards life and towards truth and towards the universe.

XII

For James, as you have already seen, my only and, to his mind, my sufficient ground for believing in my fellow's existence, for "postulating your mind," is an argument from analogy, — an extension of the inner life of my already known self, with its feelings, with its will, and with the workings of its ideas, into the perceived body of my neighbor, whose movements and expressions resemble mine.

Now, as a fact, the most important part of my knowledge about myself is based upon

knowledge that I have derived from the community to which I belong. In particular, my knowledge about the socially expressive movements of my own organism is largely derived from what I learn through the testimony of my fellow-men. Therefore I cannot use the analogy of our externally expressive movements as my principal reason for believing in the reality of the inner life of my fellow-man, because I am very largely unable to perceive my own expressive movements in as direct a way as is that in which I perceive the organism and the movements of my fellow-man.

For instance, the appearance of my fellow's countenance is to me a sign of his mind. And signs of this type stand in the front rank of those facts of perception upon which my customary interpretation of his mind depends whenever he and I are in each other's presence.

But is my main argument for the thesis that my fellow's face expresses his mind, — and that his facial expressions are evidences of the existence of his mind, — an argument

from analogy? Do I reason thus: "When my face looks thus, I feel so and so; therefore, since my neighbor's face looks thus, it is fair to reason by analogy that he feels so and so?" How utterly foreign to our social common sense would be this particular argument from analogy!

For, as a fact, I know very little about my own facial expressions, except what I learn, if indeed I learn it at all, through accepting as true certain reports of my neighbors regarding these facial expressions. I can indeed indirectly perceive my own face by looking in the mirror. But I thus learn hardly anything of importance to me about what my own changes of facial expression are. I have spent years of my life interpreting the signs which I read as I look at the countenances of other men. But when have I said to my neighbor: "Come, let us look in the glass together, so that, observing how my facial expression varies with my state of mind, I can learn to judge by the analogy of my own countenance what your changes of countenance

probably mean?" To "postulate your mind" upon such a basis would be a form of solemn fooling.

The case is trivial, but typical for the way in which we interpret the usual signs of his mind which our neighbor gives to us. In large part, since I never normally view my own organism in a perspective which is closely analogous to the perspective in which I constantly perceive the body and the movements of my fellow-man. My most important knowledge about my own expressive movements comes to me at second hand. I learn how my own movements appear through the report of others.

Thus, then, I first believe that my fellow has a mind. As part or as consequence of this belief, I accept his testimony about how the movements of my organism seem when they are perceived by another man. As a result, I learn indirectly, and by the circuitous route that, so to speak, passes through my neighbor's mind, precisely the most significant of the analogies between my neigh-

bor's expressive movements and my own. Yet these analogies are supposed, by James, and by the prevalent theory, to constitute my main evidence that my neighbor has a mind at all!

It would be hard to mention an instance of a more artificial doctrine than this prevailing opinion of philosophers regarding the bases of our social consciousness. Yet this is the very doctrine which James advances as a typical illustration of his own radical empiricism. What I, as an individual, never experience at all, — namely, precisely those analogies between my own doings and my neighbor's outward behavior which are socially most important, are named by James as furnishing my sole reason for "postulating your mind."

XIII

Why, then, do I indeed postulate your mind?

I postulate your mind, first, because, when you address me, by word or by gesture, you

arouse in me ideas which, by virtue of their contrast with my ideas, and by virtue of their novelty and their unexpectedness, I know to be not any ideas of my own.

Hereupon I first try, however I can, to interpret these ideas which are not mine. In case you are in fact the source of these new ideas of mine, I fail to find any success in my efforts to interpret these ideas as past ideas of my own which I had forgotten, or as inventions of my own, or as otherwise belonging to the internal realm which I have already learned to interpret as the realm of the self.

Hereupon I make one hypothesis. It is, in its substance, the fundamental hypothesis of all our social life. It is the hypothesis that these new ideas which your words and deeds have suggested to me actually possess an interpretation. They have an interpreter. They are interpreted. This hypothesis simply means that there exists some idea or train of ideas, which, if it were now present within my own train of consciousness, would inter-

pret what I now cannot interpret. This interpreter would mediate between the new ideas which your deeds have suggested to me, and the trains of ideas which I already call my own. That is, this interpreter, if he fully did his work, would compare all these ideas, and would both observe and express wherein lay their contrast and its meaning. My hypothesis is that such an interpreter of the novel ideas which your expressive acts have aroused in me, actually exists.

Now such an interpreter, mediating between two contrasting ideas or sets of ideas, and making clear their contrasts, their meaning, and their mutual relations, would be, by hypothesis, a mind. It would not be my own present mind; for by myself alone I actually fail to interpret the ideas which your deeds have aroused in me. And these ideas which your doings have aroused in me are simply not my own. Now this hypothetical interpreter is what I mean by your self, precisely in so far as I suppose you to be now communicating your own ideas to me. You are the

real interpreter of the ideas which your deeds suggest to me. That is what I mean by your existence as an "eject."

The reason, then, for "postulating your mind" is that the ideas which your words and movements have aroused within me are not my own ideas, and cannot be interpreted in terms of my own ideas, while I actually hold, as the fundamental hypothesis of my social consciousness, that all contrasts of ideas have a real interpretation and are interpreted.

XIV

Our illustration has carried us at once into the mazes of our problematic social life together. But the case is a typical case. We have but to view it in its principle, and it shows what attitude of the will is the only decisive one in dealing with the interpretation of experience.

You are not a mere extension by analogy of my own will to live. I do not, for the sake merely of such analogy, vivify your perceived organism. *You are an example of the principle*

whose active recognition lies at the basis of my only reasonable view of the universe. As I treat you, so ought I to deal with the universe. As I interpret the universe, so, too, in principle, should I interpret you.

We have no ground whatever for believing that there is any real world except the ground furnished by our experience, and by the fact that, in addition to our perceptions and our conceptions, we have problems upon our hands which need interpretation. Our fundamental postulate is: *The world is the interpretation of the problems which it presents.* If you deny this principle, you do so only by presenting, as Bergson does, some other interpretation as the true one. But thus you simply reaffirm the principle that the world has an interpreter.

Using this principle, in your ordinary social life, you postulate your fellow-man as the interpreter of the ideas which he awakens in your mind, and which are not your own ideas. The same principle, applied to our social experience of the physical world, determines our ordinary interpretations of nature and guides

our natural science. For, as we have seen, the physical world is an object known to the community, and through interpretation. The same principle, applied to our memories and to our expectations, gives us our view of the world of time, with all its infinite wealth of successive acts of interpretation.

In all these special instances, the application of this principle defines for us some form or grade of community, and teaches us wherein lies the true nature, the form, the real unity, and the essential life of this community.

Our Doctrine of Signs extends to the whole world the same fundamental principle. The World is the Community. The world contains its own interpreter. Its processes are infinite in their temporal varieties. But their interpreter, the spirit of this universal community, — never absorbing varieties or permitting them to blend, — compares and, through a real life, interprets them all.

The attitude of will which this principle expresses, is neither that of the affirmation nor that of the denial of what Schopenhauer

meant by the will to live. It is the attitude which first expresses itself by saying "Alone I am lost, and am worse than nothing. I need a counsellor, I need my community. Interpret me. Let me join in this interpretation. Let there be the community. This alone is life. This alone is salvation. This alone is real." This is at once an attitude of the will and an assertion whose denial refutes itself. For if there is no interpreter, there is no interpretation. And if there is no interpretation, there is no world whatever.

In its daily form as the principle of our social common sense, this attitude of the will inspires whatever is reasonable about our worldly business and our scientific inquiry. For all such business and inquiry are in and for and of the community, or else are vanity.

In its highest form, this attitude of the will was the one which Paul knew as Charity, and as the life in and through the spirit of the Community.

Such, then, is the relation of the Christian will to the real world.

XV

THE HISTORICAL AND THE ESSENTIAL

LECTURE XV

THE HISTORICAL AND THE ESSENTIAL

IN the fourth lecture of his book on "Christologies, Ancient and Modern," Professor Sanday says, of the development which was introduced into theology by Ritschl: "There is a great deal that is very wholesome in the movement out of which this development has sprung. It arose from, and has been sustained by, a great desire to look at the reality of things, to put aside conventions and to get into close and living contact with things as they are. It came to be seen that . . . as a complete philosophy of religion Hegelianism was too purely intellectual. It did not correspond to the true nature of religion, in which the emotions and the will are involved quite as much as the intellect."

I

The criticism of the religious philosophy of Hegel which these words summarily indicate, is further expressed by what Professor Sanday

says about the famous words in which David Frederic Strauss stated his own version of the Hegelian position regarding the person and work of Christ.

Strauss, as you remember, said: "As conceived of in an individual, a God-man, the attributes and functions which the Church doctrine ascribes to Christ contradict each other; in the idea of the Race they agree together. Humanity is the union of the two natures, God become man, the Infinite Spirit externalized as finite, and the finite spirit remembering its infinitude."

Professor Sanday makes the comment: "Strauss was driven to this substitution of the idea for the Person by his assumption that the idea never reaches its full expression in the individual, but only in the race. It is, however, not at all surprising that, after reducing Christianity to this shadowy semblance of itself, he should end by throwing it over altogether."

The criticism of Hegel's version of Christianity which Professor H. R. Mackintosh,

of Edinburgh, expresses in the course of the historical section of his recent book on "The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ," is longer and is also more explicitly hostile to Hegel's whole religious philosophy than are the few words which I have just cited from Professor Sanday. Professor Sanday — I ought to add — does not intend his own remark as any complete characterization of the position either of Hegel or of Strauss.

Professor Mackintosh says, concerning the Hegelian view: "Christianity receives" (according to Hegel) "absolute rank, but at the cost of its tie with history. For only the world-process as a whole, and no single point or person in it, can be the true manifestation of the Absolute." . . . "Thus, when Hegel has waved his wand, and uttered his dialectical and all-decisive formula, a change comes over the spirit of the believer's dream; everything appears to be as Christian as before, yet instinctively we are aware that nothing specifically Christian is left." . . . "When once the Gospel has been severed from a historic

person, and identified with a complex of metaphysical ideas, what it ought to be called is scarcely worth discussion; that it is no longer Christianity, is clear." . . . "Sooner or later, then, some one was bound to speak out, and expose the hollow and precarious alliance which had been proclaimed between the Christian faith and dialectic pantheism. The word which broke the spell came from Strauss."

Professor Mackintosh hereupon quotes from Strauss the further statement: "The Idea loves not to pour all its fulness into one example, in jealousy towards all the rest. Only the race answers to the Idea"; and adds, in a foot-note, "This formula has made a profound impression." And Professor Mackintosh continues: "It ought to be clear, by this time, that the proposed identification of the Christian faith with the ontological theory that God and man are one, — God the essence of man, man the actuality of God, — is an utterly hopeless enterprise, which the scientific historian cannot take seriously. . . ."

"The truth is that the very idea of religion as consisting in personal fellowship with God, had faded from Strauss's mind, and with its disappearance went also in large measure the power to sympathize with, or appreciate, essential Christian piety as it existed from the first. . . ." "In general, it may be concluded that Hegelianism tended to commit a grave offence against history by construing Christianity as a system of ideas which is intelligible and effective apart from Jesus Christ."

II

I have quoted these two expressions of opinion, the one from Professor Sanday, and the other from Professor Mackintosh, in order to introduce the issue which in this lecture I have yet to face. I shall try to meet that issue as directly as I can.

We have not, in this discussion, first approached our problem of Christianity from the side of speculation, and then attempted to find a way of identifying a group of abstract

ontological conceptions with those religious convictions which have been most prominent in the history of the Christian religion. On the contrary, my sketch of the Christian doctrine of life, and of the ideas which seem to me to be essential to that doctrine, made use of facts which belong to our common ethical and religious experience. We began with these facts. The metaphysical problems were kept in reserve until this more empirical part of the work was completed.

My hearer, if he kindly takes any interest in the present account of our problem, may indeed question whether those Christian ideas which I selected for discussion were rightly chosen. He may well insist that, in emphasizing certain aspects of Christianity, I have either ignored or slighted other aspects to which tradition has assigned the highest prominence. Such a criticism is, in part, obviously warranted. I have deliberately ignored much that tradition regards as the head of the corner. My hearer has a right to ask how my estimate of the essence of

Christianity stands related to the historical faith; and he may think, if that seems to him just, that my views have involved "an utterly hopeless enterprise, which the scientific historian cannot take seriously." I cheerfully accept the risk of such a judgment upon my study of our problem of Christianity.

But I do not believe that the foregoing lectures can justly be accused of attempting to "identify the Gospel" with any *mere* "complex of metaphysical ideas."

Such Christian ideas as I have tried to interpret, I certainly did not invent. They found me. I did not devise them. They have led us, indeed, into the presence of the most intricate metaphysical problems; but no metaphysician ever discovered them. Nor are they merely a "complex of metaphysical ideas." They come to us from human life, from the life both of the Christian Church itself, and of those communities, secular or religous, which the noblest forms of loyalty have informed, and have redeemed, precisely in so far as men have yet learned to live the

life of the universal brotherhood. For us the metaphysical meaning of these ideas has occupied, in our discussion, the second place.

Now I am indeed far from supposing that my fragmentary arguments and illustrations have exhausted the meaning of those Christian ideas which I have selected for discussion. I have been trying to tell what I see, and no more. Whoever finds in the Christian gospel meanings which tradition has emphasized, and which I have ignored, is welcome to put me in my place by whatever authority or reason he is able to employ. And since I am neither apologist, nor assailant, but am only, with the aid of my "broken light," an interpreter, I can feel no disappointment with my critic, and can find no painful defeat in the exposure of my inadequacy as an expounder of historical Christianity.

III

Scholarly opinion has, in recent decades, undergone many disappointing changes relating to the history of Christian origins. The goal of scientific agreement, both regard-

ing the founder of Christianity, and regarding the life and history of the Christian Church in the apostolic age, is very remote. And I have no right to an opinion about problems of historical criticism.

Hence I have constantly tried, in these discussions, to avoid hazarding any personal impressions of mine about what actually took place on earth at the moment when the Christian religion originated. That there were the visions of the risen Lord, we know. I have no theory regarding how they originated. I do not know to what they were due. We are sure that what was called the presence of the Spirit in the Church displayed itself in the ways which Paul describes; for the writer of the greatest of the words in the Pauline epistles spoke to those to whom these experiences were present facts. The picture of the typical Pauline Church, and its faith, as the epistles present this picture, bears witness to its own essential human meaning. Furthermore, we possess that body of sayings and of parables which early tradition attributed to

the founder. I am disposed to read these sayings as simple-mindedly as I can. They do not appear to me to constitute an expression of the whole Christian doctrine of life. They seem not to be intended as such a complete expression. I have tried to indicate some few ways in which these teachings, attributed to the founder, are most obviously related to the subsequent development of the main Christian ideas. The founder's life I must leave those to portray who have a right to judge the documents.

It will be remembered that I in no wise imagine, and have nowhere suggested, that Paul, in any just sense, was the real founder of Christianity. The Christian community into which Paul entered, and whose life he, as convert, so vastly furthered, this — I have said — this, together with its spirit, is the true founder of Christianity.

Such is the meagre foundation of historical fact by means of which I have ventured to justify the view regarding the Christian ideas which I have now laid before you. It is only my comment upon these ideas which has

brought us into the region where, as a student of philosophy, I have some right to form and to express an opinion. In stating this opinion, I have of course been obliged to interpret some of those larger historical connections which even the layman in all matters of historical scholarship has a right, I believe, to regard as topics of general knowledge.

The thesis that the religious experience of the earliest Christian community, and in particular of the Pauline churches, lies, as a deeper motive, at the basis of the whole development and dogmatic formulation of the doctrine of the person of Christ, is not a new thesis. But in the form in which I have stated it, this assertion gets its most important meaning, in my own mind, through an interpretation of the nature of communities. This interpretation, as you now know, has an aspect which I have formulated in terms of human experience. It has also its technically metaphysical aspect. To insist upon this view of the nature of the community, and to develop the consequences that follow upon

such a view, these enterprises have constituted the novelty, if there be any novelty, in my study of the essence of Christianity. These matters, as I believe, have not always been seen in the right perspective. I have done what I could to make them plain.

Now that my case has been stated, any one who holds opinions analogous to those of Professor H. R. Mackintosh might still urge upon me this question: "Is the fragment of traditional Christian doctrine which, in your own way, you interpret and defend, worthy to be called a religion at all? And if it is a religion, is this religion Christian?"

A plain question needs a plain answer. I feel a great indifference to the use of names in such regions. I am anxious to see the relations of the things that are named. So long as only technical theological formulas are in question, I do not in the least care whether this or that theologian calls me a Christian or not. But let me attempt one more mode of making clear the historical rights of my whole account of the essence of Christianity.

IV

One of the best ways of understanding our own religious ideas is to compare them, when we can, with those of some representative and highly trained Oriental mind. When intimate and practical religious interests are in question, such comparison is most effectively made through conversation with an Oriental friend, face to face. For a man speaks better than a book. Many of us will recall opportunities for personal meetings with men trained in civilizations remote from our own, as amongst the most instructive of our glimpses of what our own religion means to ourselves. The faith of our childhood, the religion of our social order, becomes for the first time clear to our consciousness when we try, at a moment of chance intimacy, to convey its deeper import to a mind that has been a total stranger to our own.

Now just as mutual remoteness of our present lives, when we are contemporaries one of another, sometimes helps an Oriental com-

panion and myself to understand each his own faith better when we take counsel together, — even so the attainment of a new understanding of my faith might be accomplished for me, as one may imagine, if I were permitted to converse with fellow-men belonging, not only to a distant civilization, but also to a distant century. How precious for our appreciation, not only of antiquity but of ourselves, it would be if, escaping from the flood of time, we could talk over the essence of Christianity with an earnest and thoughtful Christian of the apostolic age, — not with an apostle, but simply with a convert whose personal experience was deep and genuine.

For my present purpose, the fiction — the arbitrary fancy, that such converse across the centuries might take place — has one very special and limited interest.

I have stated a thesis concerning the essence of Christianity. I should understand that thesis, no doubt, better, if indeed I were able to converse, in some fictitious realm, with a Pauline Christian, — a member of one of the

apostolic churches. Let me try, in a few words, to make such a fiction momentarily intelligible to you.

It is easy to do this, I think, without trespassing upon any of the sacred places or memories of early Christian history. My sole intent is to furnish a test of the degree to which the account of the Christian ideas upon which I have insisted does furnish a just view of the essence of Christianity.

We have to compare what I take to be essential with what was, at all events in the Pauline churches and, for a time, historical Christianity. It would be useless, even were it possible, for me to make this comparison by means of any analysis of the Pauline Christology. And I could gain nothing by any poor effort of mine to amplify the picture which the best known of the epistles have left in the minds of all of us. Besides, I desire to bring the essential and the historical together in our minds, at this point, only for the sake of indicating a few very general relations of both of them to our modern problems.

My fiction must therefore illustrate large and abstract principles. It must also suggest the significance of certain very concrete religious experiences. Yet it must do this without leading us into any maze of historical details. And it must aid me to state my own case, and to show you what I suppose to be the situation which the modern mind has to face when we estimate the Christian ideas, not only in the light of human nature and of history, but also in their relation to the most abstruse problems of metaphysics. You will permit me the freedom of construction which is needed for just such a purpose.

V

Let us suppose, then, that some highly trained Greek, — as learned in philosophy as an extended sojourn in Athens, and as the training of any of the schools of his time, could make him, had been converted by Paul, had then for some years been a member of whatever Pauline church you please. I have in mind no man whose name the Acts, or the

Epistles, or the legends of later days, have preserved to us. I am thinking of no famous saint, and of no one whose earlier life as a philosopher, or whose later devotion as a Christian, became a matter of record. As I now shall feign, my Greek of the first century was one to whom the ancient cultivation had made the highest appeal which it could make to the deeply religious mind of an ingenious child of his age.

Later, at the time of his conversion, my hero heard the message that Paul brought to the Galatians, to the Corinthians, — to the other best-known Pauline churches. Thereafter, quickened, made a new creature, our convert entered into the life of his own Christian community with all the fervor, the love, the patience, and the hope which the apostle had taught him to know. With the saints that were of his company, he rejoiced in the gifts of the spirit; he awaited longingly the last great change, and the return of the heavenly man whose death had saved him. Our hero treasured up and pondered long the

apostle's words as various epistles, eagerly copied and transmitted from hand to hand and from church to church, brought them to his knowledge. And all this faith of the Church he interpreted with the clearness that his previous philosophical training had made possible.

And then, after years enough had passed to fill his soul completely with the full vision of the salvation of the whole world, — suddenly, in the fulness of grace, at the height of his own powers of mind, in the midst of his life of service, — he fell asleep, — whether at some moment of local persecution and of martyrdom, in blessed fulfilment of his dearest earthly desires, I know not.

So much my fiction first in outline sketches. But hereupon I shall imagine a great change. This is not the change which Christian hope, in the mind of a member of a Pauline church, contemplated. The fictitious change shall be this: From centuries of dreamless slumber, our Pauline Christian awakes in this modern world of ours. He retains, or soon again re-

sumes, a perfect memory of all his former life, with its hopes, its religion, its faith, and its opinions regarding things on earth and in heaven. He awakes with the full consciousness of a mature and earnest Pauline Christian, but with no faintest ray of knowledge, at the moment when he returns to life, concerning the entire intervening history of mankind. He awakes, moreover, with the full intellectual equipment, with the ingenuity, and the thoughtfulness which his early training as a Greek philosopher had bred in him before his conversion.

And the task which some higher power sets him in our own day is the task of entering our world under conditions which are first to train him in the lore of our modern, of our secular, of our scientific, of our political, life, before his new education shall be allowed to bring him into contact with any form, or opinion, or tradition of the modern Christian Church.

He is to learn about what Christianity now means only after he has first been permitted,

and stimulated, to become a highly trained product of the worldly cultivation of our age. In ancient times, before Paul's message told him of the power of grace, he was a philosopher. And even so, in the modern world, he has every opportunity which scientific study and which all forms of secular learning can furnish to him, within the time allowed for his new career. The result is to reawaken and train his philosophical interest; and to prepare him to master our problems, — except for one great limitation. Namely, until this new course of preliminary training has been duly completed by the powers who have his new life in their control, he is allowed to learn nothing of our problem of Christianity, nothing of what dogmas the Councils of the Church ever defined, nothing of the past relations between Christianity and the philosophers, — in brief, nothing that lets him know what any form of Christianity has been, except the one Christian faith under whose spell he lived of old, before the long sleep overtook him.

We are feigning indeed an artificial course

for the new education to which our reawakened Christian is to be subject. Yet, if you choose to aid my halting imagination a little, I believe that you can even picture, yes, if you choose, can name, the places in our modern world where the ingenious and potent teachers, to whom charge over our hero has been committed, are able to keep their scholar long secluded from all knowledge of the Christian religion as it now exists, and of Christian history as it has run its course since the first century passed away. And yet, in such places (I leave you to name them), — these guides of our returned Greek, through due censorship of what he is permitted to read, and through a control of the things and of the people that he is permitted to see, allow him to gratify a vast range of modern curiosity; yet keep him, during his period of preparation, unaware of the very existence of a post-Pauline Christianity, and of our present religious situation. He studies long and deeply in the various realms of our science and of our art. When he meets in the course of these

studies with allusions to religion, nobody, for a long time, tells him what they mean. He becomes absorbed in many of the problems of our social order. Nobody explains to him that this is a Christian social order. For in our day, as we all know, secular learning and religious lore live so much apart that he long fails to observe that they have any connections.

But I care not further to elaborate my fiction. Its purpose appears when I add that, by the will of the higher powers concerned, all this preliminary training of our hero is intended to lead to the moment when, still clear in his memory both of the Greco-Roman world as it was, and of Christianity as the apostolic churches had experienced its meaning, but now brought into close touch with the spirit of our own age, and acquainted with important results of our own science and art, our visitor from a former world is ready for the great issue. One more change comes.

At last, then, he is led face to face with Christianity as it is; and he is acquainted with the outlines of its history from his day

to our own. Hereupon, indeed, his problem of Christianity and our problem stand together before him.

What has he now to say? And, — since I am here venturing to feign all this only as a means for making clearer my own case, — what, in reply to his imagined words, should I, if I were permitted to speak to him, have to offer to him as an answer to his problem?

VI

Our stranger from the past finds that many of the religious ideas which once were to him, as a Pauline Christian, very dear and — as he had supposed — quite essential, now are tragically at variance with what he has learned since he was awakened. The ascertained results of our science, the course of history, yes, some of the very ideas which he now finds to be most emphasized by the official traditions of the existing historical Church, — all these seem to be at war with the spirit which of old promised to guide the faithful into all truth. Our hero has awakened to a

sad new world. If I have ventured thus tragically to disturb his slumbers, my only justification for the seemingly wanton intrusion upon his peace lies in the fact that his imaginary case is an allegorical picture of our own real case. As he wonders over the strange vicissitudes of faith, so ought we to wonder. Let us learn some of the lessons which he has to learn about the contrast between what is historical and what is essential in Christian faith.

Before any of his other instruction came to him, our guest from the apostolic age began his new life by finding, with deep disappointment, that the hope of which all the apostles, as far as he knew the apostles, made so much, has never been fulfilled. The end has never come. The Lord has not returned. The saints have not triumphed. The bride waits in vain for the bridegroom. When Paul said, "Behold, brethren, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep; but we shall all be changed," the words seemed to our Pauline Christian an expression of an essential part

of the faith. Both the resurrection of the dead and its early occurrence; both the meaning of the resurrection of Christ, and the certainty of the nearness of the Lord's return; both the hope of immortality and the assurance that the Kingdom must quickly come, — these matters together had seemed, to the apostolic converts, equally of the very essence of the faith. Paul had not divided these various teachings one from another. If some one of old had said to the believers: "The return of Christ is *not* near. The world is to undergo centuries of torment and of division; the Church itself is to be corrupted with power and distracted with earthly cares; the gifts of the spirit are to be for ages withdrawn; and no sign of heavenly salvation is for all those years to appear in the clouds"; — then the faithful of the former time would have answered such a scoffer according to his faithlessness. They would have said of his words what Professor Mackintosh says of Hegel's waving of the dialectical wand; namely, that what the scoffer taught was possibly not worthy of any

religious name; but was very certainly not Christianity.

Yet the very first discovery of our Greek, upon awakening, has been that every dearest hope of the early Church concerning the near deliverance of the suffering world was a delusion; and that certain of the apostle Paul's most burning and seemingly inspired words were a statement of literally and historically false predictions.

Since he became aware of what the Christian Church has become since the apostolic age, our Greek has had many reasons to reflect that if he, at least, is to remain a modern Christian, he must remember that he is a philosopher, and must begin in a new form the ancient task of distinguishing between symbol and truth, between figure and literally accurate statement, between parable and interpretation. So far as the end of the world is concerned, he has now learned that the Church itself, not long after the apostolic age, began a course in which all but certain transient and enthusiastic sects have persisted until this

day. The Church learned, namely, to defend what it viewed as the essential faith of the apostles concerning the end of the world, only by declaring henceforth that the apostles either were not permitted truthfully to grasp this essential faith concerning last things, or else did not mean what they said, but used figures of speech.

This has constituted the first lesson concerning the relations between the historical and the essential which our early Christian saint, now transformed into a latter-day philosopher, has been forced to learn.

VII

Unquestionably, certain teachings about the person and work of Christ seemed of old, and still seem, to our reawakened Pauline Christian essential to the religion which Paul taught to him.

I will not attempt to restate what constitutes so much of the essence of Christianity: "I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye

received, wherein also ye stand, by which also ye are saved, . . . in what words I preached unto you, if ye hold it fast, except ye believed in vain." This gospel, our Pauline Christian fully remembers. The cross, the death, the resurrection, the appearance of the risen Lord to the brethren, — these he knew to be matters which of old he fully accepted, so far as he then understood them. These he believed to be both essential and historical truths. His present problem is: How far, and in what form, is this heart of the Pauline doctrine something which for him to-day, in the light of what the modern world has learned, and in view of what it has forgotten, he can still hold to be both true, and unchangeable, and adequate? When he reviews the transformations which time has wrought, is he still able to say, "Christianity is to remain for me what Paul said that it was"? "In this I stand; by this I am saved": — can he persist in using these words?

When he tries to answer this question, our

guest has to remember that this modern world differs from the world in whose perspective Paul saw this picture of salvation; and differs too in many other respects besides those which now make Paul's language about the early return of the Lord appear to be a figure of speech whereby the early saints were actually misled.

In all those features which used most to appeal to his imagination, in the days of his apostolic discipleship, our returned Greek knows that the Pauline world has been, both for Christian believers in particular and for all typical modern men in general, simply transformed. Its heavens have passed away. Its very earth has become almost unrecognizable. All the most vividly interesting of those orders of spiritual beings whom Paul imagined as the background of his picture of salvation, have changed, or have entirely lost their meaning, for most of us. The Pauline angels were by no means similar even to those incorporeal spiritual beings of whom a later orthodox theology discoursed; and whom the

scholastic angelology made a topic of learned speculation. Whatever non-human spiritual beings there are, nobody, whether orthodox mediæval Christian or modern man of science, conceives them as Paul imagined his angels. The Pauline demonology, too, has no meaning at all closely resembling its apostolic form, when even the most conservative scholastic theologian deals to-day with the beings still called by the same name.

Paul's whole picture of nature is remote from ours. Our reawakened Greek knows that all the references to warfare with principalities and powers, that all the words of Paul regarding the mystery cults as involving a partaking of the cup of demons, must be interpreted in a profoundly symbolic fashion before they can now be understood or accepted. In fact, whatever the apostle told the churches of old can be retained only in case a large use of symbols is made.

When our Pauline Christian turns to the dogmas which the later Church has defined, and looks to them as his guides for interpret-

ing the gospel wherein he once stood, and by which he was to be saved, he finds, in these later formulations, very much that seems to him almost as strange as Paul himself would have seemed if the apostle had been present to take part in a scholastic disputation during the Middle Ages.

And as to the central doctrine of the person of Christ, it was inseparable, in the mind of the Pauline Christian, from the doctrine of the living divine spirit present in the Church. And that, after all, was what the whole story of the life, the death, and the exaltation of Christ most meant to the Pauline believer. Moreover, as such a believer, our guest had known very little about the person of the historical Jesus, except what the story of the Divine death, of the resurrection, of the reappearance, of the exaltation, and of the indwelling of Christ, both in the Church, and in the believer's heart, had made for our guest himself, and for his brethren, in the old days, a matter of common social religious experience, and not of mere narrative. If the

Pauline doctrine of the person of Christ was, then, indeed essential to the Pauline faith, this, its very essence, consisted in its character as a doctrine of the nature and life of the Church. For the exalted and divine Christ was explicitly known and interpreted by Paul as the very life of the Church itself. And his appearance on earth had its redemptive meaning through its power as the work of the founder of the beloved community.

Our returned saint stands, then, in presence of a great problem. If all this old faith is to mean anything to him to-day, *some* vast range of Pauline religious ideas must be regarded henceforth as symbols, as parables, as shadows cast by the things of some higher world, when they pass between the entrance of our cave and the realm of unapproachable light beyond. Our Pauline Christian of the twentieth century may well remember the vision of the divine which once was his. He may fully believe still in its essential truth. He may believe that this truth had its historical basis. But now that he has returned

to our world, he must no longer trust indiscriminately all the shadowy appearances. He must distinguish between those which reveal the things of the spiritual world as they are, and those which essentially belong to the eyes of us who dwell in the cave. Our guest can remain, in spirit, a Pauline Christian, only in case he also learns, while justly recognizing the known world of to-day, how *not* to confer henceforth with flesh and blood, and how to discern spiritually the things of the spirit, despite the complexities of our modern realm.

What way will he find to escape from his problems, — to be just to the countless novelties of our present century, and yet not to lose the essence of the gospel which Paul preached unto him, which he also received, wherein also he stood, by which also he was to be saved?

VIII

I have no right to mention any one answer which our guest must necessarily give to all the questions thus forced upon him. He

may, for all that I know, either at this moment accept, or hereafter come to accept, any one of our current doctrines of the person of Christ, orthodox or liberal, dogmatic or speculative. But of this I am sure. If he can, despite all the changes and the disillusionments to which he has already been subjected, and also despite all the further changes which he has yet to undergo; and in all the new light upon the essence of Christianity which coming centuries will bring to him, — if, I say, he can through all this remain true to the deepest spirit of his Pauline Christianity, despite the vast masses of ancient imagery and of legend which he must learn to view as mere symbols of deeper truth, — then the one thing by which he must hold fast is the Pauline doctrine of the presence of the redeeming divine spirit in the living Church. This doctrine, in some form, he must retain. If he can retain it, he will be in spirit a Pauline Christian, however he otherwise interprets the person of Christ.

So long as he is able somehow to hold fast to the principle of this doctrine, — then, no

matter what he has already learned or hereafter learns to sacrifice, both of legend and of miracle; both of narrative and of abstractly formulated dogma; both of the literally interpreted words of the apostle concerning angels and concerning demons and concerning the coming end of the world; and no matter what, in due time, he has to sacrifice of the literally interpreted records of the gospel history, — through all this he will remain true, — not necessarily to all that, as Pauline Christian, he once held, or even thus far holds, to be essential. He will, however, remain true to what, as a fact, was the very heart of all the hearts of the faithful, both in the Pauline churches and in all the subsequent ages of Christian development.

The one condition of such holding fast by the deepest spirit of all the Christian ages is, I repeat, that he should still be able to say: The redeeming divine spirit that saves man dwells in the Church. So much our guest said when he was a saint of old. His problem of Christianity is now simply the problem

whether he can say this to-day. His problem for the future is the problem whether he can continue to say this.

If, in order to be able to say this, he has to learn now, or in the future, to view as symbol, as legend, as myth, any accepted narrative that you may mention concerning the person of Christ, he will be in genuine touch both with the perfectly historical Christianity of Paul, and with the deepest meaning of the whole of Christian history, so long as he is still able to say, The divine spirit dwells in the Church, and thereby redeems mankind. So long as, for him, the Christ whom Paul preached is known, as he was to Paul, not mainly after the flesh, but after the Spirit, our returned Pauline Christian will deal with literal truth, precisely in so far as the divine spirit does dwell in the Church. And our guest will never lose touch with genuine historical Christianity, precisely so long as he, who learned this teaching, as Paul learned it, from the Church itself, holds it as the doctrine wherein is expressed whatever is most vital

in Christianity, and whatever has always been most at the heart of the influence of Christianity upon civilization.

IX

Hereupon you may ask: "But what church shall our Pauline Christian accept as the true Christian Church?" The answer is simple. I have indicated that answer in the first part of our lectures.

Our guest will certainly *not* take a very profound interest in whatever has divided the later Christian world into great or into little mutually exclusive partitions. The official aspects of the post-Pauline church will *not* attract his most eager interest. Still less will he feel much concerned with the endless ebb and flow of the more petty sectarian strifes. His church, then, will be neither the official church nor the sect. Those efforts which ignore the larger human hopes and the universal mission of the apostolic Church, — those efforts which exhaust themselves in barren imitations of the enthusiastic accidents

of the early communities, will not seem to our Pauline Christian to represent the Church which he knew.

He will therefore care not at all for the founding of still other and new sects. The great Church organizations he will value for whatever life of the spirit they have fostered. Their wars with one another or with the heretics he will regard as due to blindness, — to the original sin of man the social animal.

Least of all will he accept an interpretation of Christianity, if such there be, which, centring all its interests in an effort to perfect its picture of the human personality of the founder, believes the Church itself to be a relatively accessory or accidental feature of Christianity, — least of all will our Pauline Christian accept, I say, this interpretation (amongst all the serious attempts to deal with his problem) as the true expression of the essence of Christianity.

No, if our Pauline Christian is to remain true to the spirit of his original faith, the one essential article of his creed must be: The

divine spirit dwelling in the living Church redeems mankind. Therefore, his test of the Church will simply be this, that, in so far as it is indeed the Church, it actually unifies all mankind and makes them one in the divine spirit. All else in Paul's teaching our guest may come to regard as symbol, or as legend. This he must hold to be literally true, or else he must lose the essence of his faith. The Church, however, must mean the company of all mankind, in so far as mankind actually win the genuine and redeeming life in brotherhood, in loyalty, and in the beloved community.

Our guest from the far-off first century has learned that the very power of the early Church was inseparable from its erroneous belief that the world was about to end. For only through this belief was it able to become sure that, through God's power, its intimate little companies, when they loved so well their life of the spirit, were witnessing, or were about to witness, the salvation of all mankind.

Now just as the Pauline churches were able to win truth even through the heart of

their error, — even so, for our Pauline Christian, whatever errors have still to be abandoned, and whatever symbols have to be translated into new speech, the true Church is represented on earth by whatever body of men are most faithful, according to their lights, to the cause of the unity of all mankind. Therefore no sect, no detached individual, and no official organization can constitute the true Church, except in so far as such body or individual shall be found full of the spirit and actually furthering the advent of the universal community. Yet, for our Pauline Christian, if he can indeed hold fast his early faith, the Church will be a reality, just as, to his mind, it was already real in the little Pauline communities, and just as it is now real wherever two or three are gathered together in the name of the genuinely divine spirit.

All this, I say, our Pauline Christian can regard as in essence the faith of the apostles. If despite all changes he still can hold that so much of their faith was literally true, then nobody need dictate to him what he shall

further hold regarding the person or regarding the work of Christ. Christ was for Paul the indwelling Spirit of the community, whose personal history was, for him, an historical reality, spiritually interpreted, just as the coming judgment was a near future historical event, and was also to be historically interpreted. Our reawakened Pauline Christian will remain true to his original faith so long as he can retain its spiritual interpretation. He will also remain true to a genuinely historical Christianity, so long as he holds fast by his Pauline faith. And this essential faith in the divine presence of the spirit in the Church he can retain, whatever be his view as to the literal correctness of the reports of the coming judgment, and whatever he comes to hold, as to the correctness of this or of that account of the person of Christ.

X

Herewith I come to the one word which I should wish to offer to our guest were I permitted to present to him the doctrine of the

community which, in this second portion of our discussion, I have attempted in outline to expound and to defend.

The final task of interpretation which I thus assume is determined, for me, both by the general plan of our whole inquiry, and by the feigned situation of our Pauline Christian. His case, as I have stated it, is a dream of my own. But in truth his fancied case is our real case. He is our genuine modern man. He is the child of the whole historical process of humanity. His is the education of the human race. Modern civilization, with all its problems and its tragedies, is, in the very loftiest of its hopes, in the most precious of its spiritual possessions, in the heart of its deepest faith, a product, — yes, if you will, despite its endless crimes, — a disciple and a convert of the divine spirit that for a while manifested itself in the Pauline churches.

I say this in no partisan spirit, and not in the defence or in the praise of any sect, or of any one Christian church, nor even for the

sake of extolling the work which the whole Christian labor of the centuries has accomplished. The Christian churches and nations of mankind have done as yet but the very least fragment of what it was their task to accomplish; namely, to bring the Beloved Community into existence, or to bring the Kingdom of Heaven to earth. But, in all their weakness, their blindness, their strifes, the Christian churches and nations have had this to their spiritual profit; namely, that to them has been committed the greatest task of the ages; and they have been more or less clearly aware of the fact. So far as they have been thus aware, they have gradually grown in the practice and in the love of the art of brotherhood. They have also tended towards the organization, still so remote, in which the ideal of the Church is yet to find its expression, if indeed humanity ever succeeds in its task at any time. Hence, indeed, our Christian civilization, precisely in so far as it has thus succeeded, has expressed the power of precisely that spirit which manifested itself

in the Pauline churches. And if, hereafter, what we now call Christian civilization passes away, and if what we now know as a civilization alien or hostile to Christianity comes to undertake this task of unifying mankind, and succeeds therein, — then that strange new civilization will never be more remote, we may be sure, from the life of the Pauline churches, and from the spirit which dwelt in them, than we now are. Even now, the name Christian is a very small thing in comparison with the right to use that name which any company of men, of any faith under heaven, possess, if indeed the Pauline charity pervades their life, unifies their own community, and thus brings nearer the brotherhood of all mankind, and the triumph of the true and only church universal.

Our guest, then, has the same problem with ourselves. If he is true to his faith, and if we know what true loyalty is, he and we acknowledge one Lord and one faith. What we both desire to know is whether this faith has a literal foundation in the deepest nature

of things. Is the whole real world the expression of one divine process? And is this process the process of the Spirit?

XI

Our guest is a philosopher. As such I address him. In his case there is no fear lest I should arouse false hopes of merely verbal agreements. He has been too much and too often disillusioned to be likely to mistake my own use of symbols for a careless or an unjust desire to arouse false hopes. He knows that I have no legends to defend from critical attacks. He knows that the world of which I speak is one to which only one perfectly determinate portion of the Pauline phraseology applies. I have already said what that portion is. I now have only to summarize that word.

Addressing our guest, I should sum up the result of our metaphysical inquiry thus: The world is the process of the spirit. An endless time-sequence of events is controlled, according to this account, by motives which,

endless in their whole course, interpret the past to the future. These motives express themselves in an evolution wherein to every problem corresponds, in the course of the endless ages, its solution, to every antithesis its resolution, to every estrangement its reconciliation, to every tragedy the atoning triumph which interprets its evil. That this, on the whole, is the character of the world-process, our argument has insisted. But how this reconciliation takes place, we have not attempted to know. Concerning the details of the world of time, we can learn only by historical experience.

But, this, — such is my thesis, — this is the world of interpretation whose outlines, in the foregoing, I have been attempting, very dimly, to portray. This world is throughout essentially social, as is also our own human world. It is essentially historical, as is any world involving a time-process. It is essentially teleological, as is every world wherein we can speak, as, according to our philosophy of interpretation, we can justly speak, of a process involving true development.

Now of this world as a whole, our sketch has indeed attempted to suggest only the barest outlines. The principal feature which, in these lectures, I have been able to portray, is that this world has the structure of a community.

But hereupon there remains one further and centrally important feature upon which to insist. This endless order of time stands in contrast to an ideal goal, which the world endlessly pursues with its sequence of events, but never reaches at any one moment of the time sequence. The pursuit, the search for the goal, the new interpretation which every new event requires, — this endless sequence of new acts of interpretation, — this constitutes the world. This *is* the order of time. This pursuit of the goal, this bondage of the whole creation to the pursuit of that which it never reaches, — this naturally tragic estrangement of this world from its goal, — this constitutes the problem of the universe.

"Such," so I should say, addressing our guest: "Such was your Pauline world. Lost

it was; because through no earthly power could it ever reach its goal. It was groaning and travailing in pain until now. It needed a deliverer. It hoped for such a deliverer. The Christian Church believed that, through the might of the spirit, the world had, at last, found its deliverer. The divine spirit had appeared on earth, and now dwelt in the community of the faithful."

"Paul's symbols," so I should continue (still addressing our guest), "were but images of the truth when he spoke of the coming end of the world. So were his symbols but allegorical when he told of the way in which the world was redeemed. But concerning the redemption of the world he knew two absolute truths. Both of them he expressed in figures. Let me express both of them in terms of our doctrine of the real community.

"The salvation of the world occurs progressively, endlessly, in constant contest with evil, as a process that is never ended. The deeds which we know as genuinely interpreting the past to the future, as the reconciling deeds,

as the deeds which accomplish what is possible towards making the world seem to us a divine process, are deeds of charity and of atonement. These can exist in their true form only in the community. In the human world you of the Pauline churches knew them as the deeds through which the divine spirit was manifested. These deeds, as you asserted, not the power of flesh and blood, but the spirit who founded the Church, and who dwelt in it, accomplished.

"Our doctrine of the world as a community, of the social life of the universe endlessly revealing the divine, — never wholly at any one time, but in the world's process, expresses in the form of the metaphysics of the community what you grasped through an intuition of faith.

"But the salvation of the whole world, the consciousness that in its wholeness the world is and expresses and fulfils the divine plan, and is wholly interpreted and reconciled, — this is something which is never completed at any point of time. Yet this unity of the spirit,

this consciousness of reconciliation, this triumph over the universal death whereof every event in time furnishes an illustration, this occurs, in our world of interpretation, not at any one moment of time, but through an insight into the meaning of all that occurs in time. We do not declare, in our metaphysical doctrine, that the divine consciousness is timeless. We declare that the whole order of time, the process of the spirit, is interpreted, and so interpreted that, when viewed in the light of its goal, the whole world is reconciled to its own purposes. The endless tragedies of its sequence are not only interpreted step by step through deeds of charity and of atonement, but, as it were (I speak now wholly in a figure), 'in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,' the whole of time, with all its tragedies, is, by the interpreter of the universe, reconciled to its own ideal. And in this final union of temporal sequence, of the goal that is never attained in time, and of the divine spirit through whom the world is reconciled to itself and to its own purpose, the real com-

munity, the true interpretation, the divine interpreter, the plan of salvation, — these are expressed."

"This," I should say to our guest, "is indeed not religion, but metaphysics. You as philosopher, and as Pauline Christian, well know the distinction. But you at least know what is vital in Christianity. You know your own problem and ours. You then can judge, you who are the true heir of all the ages, — the true modern man, — whether we have, in all this, duly distinguished between the essential and the historical, and shown their unity."

"At all events," so I should finally say, "we know that whether the modern man calls himself a Christian or not, is a matter of names. We know, however, what it is to believe in the presence of the spirit in the Church. We know that whoever can see his way to define and to justify such a belief, may indeed not be called a Christian, but has solved what is indeed essential about the problem of Christianity."

XVI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

LECTURE XVI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

IN beginning these lectures I said that I should undertake the task neither of the apologist nor of the hostile critic of Christianity.

I

Some of my hearers may have thought this statement to be modelled after the word of "jesting Pilate," who asked, "What is truth?" but "stayed not for an answer." When I added, at the same time, that I should also avoid the position, not only of the hostile, but of the indifferent critic of Christianity, the paradox of this initial definition of our undertaking may have appeared to become hopeless. "What?" — so my hearer may have inwardly exclaimed, — "neither apologist, nor hostile critic, nor yet indifferent? What manner of philosophy of the Christian religion can such a student propound? A Pilate, — but a Pilate who adds

that he is not even indifferent, — who shall assume and maintain this character?"

I was willing, at the outset of our course, to accept the risk of such a judgment. I then justified my position merely in so far as the emphasis upon our title: "The Problem of Christianity," enabled me to remind you from the outset that problems ought to be considered, if possible, with an open mind. Yet you will also have felt that whoever discusses a problem hopes to reach some result; and that whoever invites others to take part with him in such a discussion is responsible for showing in the end, to those who listen, some outcome which will make the quest seem to them worth while. And if indeed we are to get any result from the study of the problem of Christianity, must not such a result take the form either of a defence or of an attack, or of a counsel to regard the whole topic with indifference? With such obvious objections in mind some of you may have listened to our first lecture.

But now that our inquiry is completed, and

now that we come to summarize its results, are we not prepared to return to our initial statement, and to see why, despite its paradox, it was justified, and has not proved fruitless? Nothing is farther from my wish than to magnify unduly the extremely modest office of the philosophical inquirer. But when I now ask, not: "What have I, in all my weakness as a student of philosophy, accomplished in the course of these few lectures?" but "What word would an ideally trustworthy teacher, if such were accessible to us, address to the modern man concerning the problem of Christianity?" I have to remember that not merely Pontius Pilate, but quite another man, is reported to have said something that bears upon this very problem. Let my words, so far as they are mine, be forgotten. But let us remember that John the Baptist, according to the gospel story, was no apologist for the teaching of the Kingdom of Heaven, and was still less its hostile critic, and was least of all an indifferent critic. What the burden of his

preaching was, we all know: "The axe is laid at the root of the tree. The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." John did not create a new sect. He did not preach a new creed. He did not himself undertake to found a new religion. He did not defend; he did not assail the Kingdom of Heaven. He announced that a religion, long needed, was yet to come. His references to the early end of all things, and to the imminence of the final transformation of human affairs, may well have been, like all other Apocalyptic announcements of those days, only symbols. But the deeper meaning that lay beneath his teaching was none the less true. I hold that this deeper meaning is still true. The Kingdom of Heaven is still at hand in precisely the sense in which every temporal happening is, in its own way, and, according to its special significance, a prophecy of the triumph of the spirit, and a revelation of the everlasting nearness of the insight which interprets, and of the victory which overcomes the world.

II

The essential message of Christianity has been the word that the sense of life, the very being of the time process itself, consists in the progressive realization of the Universal Community in and through the longings, the vicissitudes, the tragedies, and the triumphs of this process of the temporal world. Now this message has been historically expressed through the symbols, through the traditions, and through the concrete life of whatever human communities have most fully embodied the essential spirit of Christianity. We know not in what non-human forms the spiritual life may now or hereafter find its temporal embodiment. Our metaphysical doctrine, dealing, as it does, with universal issues, is quite unable to extend our vision to any heavenly realm of angelic powers. We have undertaken merely to defend a thesis regarding the form in which the life of the community, whether human or non-human, finds its conscious expression.

On earth, as we have seen, the universal community is nowhere visibly realized. But in the whole world, the divine life is expressed in the form of a community. Herewith, in teaching us this general but intensely practical truth, the "kindly light" seems also to show us not, in its temporal details, "the distant scene," but the "step" which we most need to see "amid the encircling gloom." And our little task it has been to learn whether, for our special purpose, that step is not, in just our present sense, "enough."

III

This is why we have been right to take, not Pilate indeed, but John the Baptist, for our guide. The Kingdom of Heaven is "at hand." For, in the true unity of the spirit, we always stand in the presence of the divine interpretation of the whole temporal process, and are members, if we choose, of the truly universal community. Yet, since only the whole of time can express the whole of the

ideal, and can exhaust the meaning of the process of the spirit, no one event constitutes "the coming of the end," and the true church never yet has become visible to men. And that is true simply because the meaning of the whole of time can never become adequately visible at any one moment of time. Whoever reaches the Kingdom must accept this limitation of every finite and temporal being. He must not say: Lo here! and Lo there! Signs and wonders will not be vouchsafed to him, or to his hearers, as sufficient to present any immediate vision of the divine presence. The truth of the word: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," will never be merely perceived; just as this same truth will never be expressible in terms of the abstract conceptions which James found to be so "sterile." This truth is simply the truth of an interpretation. What it means is that, for every estrangement that appears in the order of time, there somewhere is to be found, and will be found, the reconciling spiritual event; that for every

wrong there will somewhere appear the corresponding remedy; and that for every tragedy and distraction of individual existence the universal community will find the way — how and when we know not — to provide the corresponding unity, the appropriate triumph. We are saved through and in the community. There is the victory which overcomes the world. There is the interpretation which reconciles. There is the doctrine which we teach. This, so far as we have had time, in these brief lectures, to state our case, is our philosophy, and this doctrine, as we assert, is in agreement with what is vital in Christianity.

The apologists for Christian tradition generally fail to express such a doctrine, because they misread the symbols which tradition has so richly furnished. The assailants of Christianity are generally ignorant of the meaning of the ideal of the universal and beloved community. Those who are indifferent to Christianity are generally unaware of what salvation through loyalty signifies.

Hence it has been necessary for us to refuse to take part with any of the parties to the traditional controversies. Hereby we have been able to interpret, however, what the apologists and the critics of Christianity equally need to recognize. Therefore I submit that our quest has not been fruitless.

IV

Our last words must include two final attempts to set our case before you for your judgment. The first of these attempts will be an effort to furnish one more illustration of our philosophy. The second attempt will endeavor to point out a practical application of our foregoing teaching.

Let me briefly indicate what each of these closing considerations will be. First, let me speak of the illustration of our philosophy which I here propose to offer.

I have already said that we cannot, like the founders of new religious faiths, point to any sign or wonder as the evidence that

we have rightly interpreted the divine process of which the world is the expression. Yet, as I leave our argument, in its incomplete statement, to produce, if possible, some effect upon your future thoughts about these matters, I wish to call your attention, — not to a further technical proof of our philosophy of interpretation, but to a closing exemplification of its main doctrine. This example may serve to bring our philosophy, which many of you will have found too recondite and too speculative, into closer touch with certain thoughtful interests which not only our own age, but many future ages of human inquiry, are certain to cherish.

I wish, namely, to indicate that our main thesis concerning the World of Interpretation is not only in harmony with the spirit which guides the researches of the empirical natural sciences, but is, in a very striking way, suggested to us afresh when we ponder the meaning which the very existence and the successes of the empirical sciences seem to imply. In other words, I wish to show you

that our theory of the World of Interpretation, and our doctrine that the whole process of the temporal order is the progressive expression of a single spiritual meaning, is — not indeed proved — but lighted up, when we reconsider for a moment the question: "What manner of natural world is this in which the actual successes of our inductive sciences are possible?"

You will understand that what I say in this connection is a mere hint, and is not intended as a demonstrative argument. Our philosophy of interpretation teaches that the whole of time is a manifestation of a world-order which contains its own interpreter. But the illustration to which I shall call your attention shows us a connection between philosophical idealism and natural science such as few have ever recognized. Once more I have here to express my indebtedness to Charles Peirce. For it is he who has repeatedly pointed out that this matter to which I shall call your attention has a deep meaning, and tends to make probable

a thesis about the nature of things which we shall find to be in close harmony with our doctrine of the world as a progressively realized Community of Interpretation.

So much for a hint of the first of the two matters which these closing words will call to your notice. The second matter will concern the practical outcome of our quest. I have no new faith to preach, and no ambition to found either a sect or a party. But it is fair to ask yet one question as the last issue which we have time to face. If our account of the Problem of Christianity is true, what ought we to do for the furtherance of our common religious interests? With a summary formulation of that question, and with a very little counsel regarding its answer, my lecture, and this course, will end.

V

Next, then, let me sketch my closing illustration of our philosophy of interpretation. Let me show you that there is a har-

mony, unexpected and interesting, between the view of the universe which the general philosophy of these lectures defends, and the result to which we are led when we ponder, as Charles Peirce has taught us to ponder, upon the conditions which make the actual successes of our natural sciences possible.[1]

Every one knows that the natural sciences depend, for their existence, upon inductive inquiries. And all of us are aware, in a general way, of what is meant by induction. When one collects facts of experience and then infers, with greater or less probability, that some proposition relating to facts not yet observed, or relating to the laws of nature, is a true proposition, the thinking process which one uses is called inductive reasoning. The conditions which make a process of reasoning inductive are thus twofold. First, inductive reasoning is based upon an experi-

[1] Charles Peirce has repeatedly given expression to the thoughts about the nature and conditions of the inductive sciences to which I here, in passing, shall refer. A notable expression of opinion upon the subject occurs in a brief passage contained in his extremely interesting essay entitled "A Neglected Argument for the Being of God," published in the *Hibbert Journal* during 1908.

ence of particular facts. That is, inductions depend upon observations or experiments. Secondly, what one concludes or infers, from the observations or experiments in question, follows from these facts not necessarily, but with some more or less precisely estimable degree of probability. The terms "inductive inference" and "probable inference" are almost precisely equivalent terms.[1] If you draw from given premises or presuppositions a conclusion such that, *in case* the premise is true, the conclusion *must* be true, the process of reasoning which is in question is called "necessary inference" or "deductive inference" (these two terms being, for our present purposes, equivalent). But if, upon assuming certain premises to be true, you find that they merely make a given conclusion *probable*, the inference which guides you to the conclusion is an inductive inference.

[1] Objections to an assertion of the *precise* equivalence of the terms "inductive inference" and "probable inference" exist, but need not be discussed in the present connection, since they are irrelevant to the matter which Charles Peirce's comment here calls to our notice.

Examples of such inference may easily be mentioned. Thus a life insurance company, in assuming new risks, and in computing premiums, is guided by mortality tables. Such tables summarize, in a statistical fashion, facts which previous experience has furnished regarding the ages at which men have died. The insurance actuaries compute, upon the basis of the tables, the mortalities of men who are yet to be insured. The results of the tables and of the computations are probable inferences to the effect that of a certain number of men, who are now in normal condition and who are of a given age, a certain proportion will die within a year, or within ten years, or within some other chosen interval of time. Such probable inferences are used, by the insurance company, in determining the rate at which it is safe to insure a given applicant who appears to be, upon examination, a "good risk" for his age. Nobody can know when any one individual man will die; and the insurance company draws as few inferences as possible

regarding the case of any one individual man. But the premium charged to the individual man who wishes to insure his life is determined by the fact that the company is insuring, not this man alone, but a large number of men at about the same time; and inferences about the proportion of some large number of men who will die within a year, or within ten years, can be rendered, through the use of good methods, very highly probable. Now the insurance company's processes of inference include some numerical computations which, within certain limits, remain mainly deductive. For the outcome of a correct numerical computation is, when considered in itself, a necessary inference. But the principal and decisive basis of the insurance company's inferences is such that the inferences drawn are inductive and not deductive. That is, the reasoning of the insurance company is based upon particular observed facts, and the conclusions drawn are merely probable conclusions. If the mortality tables are correct, these conclusions,

when applied to large numbers of insured persons, are highly probable. They are never certain.

What the insurance companies do when they reason about taking new risks is an example of a method widely used in the natural sciences. A collection of facts of observation, a statistical study of these facts, and a probable inference based upon such statistics, — these, in many cases, make up a great part of the work of an inductive science.

VI

But the statistical methods used by the insurance companies are not the only methods known to natural science. Another sort of probable inference is also known, and is, in many cases, of much more importance for natural science than is the more directly statistical method which the insurance companies use. This other method is known to you all. It is the method of forming hypotheses and of testing these hypotheses

by comparing their results with experience. Let me mention a well-known instance of this method. We can then see how it contrasts with the methods most frequently used by the insurance companies, and why it is a valuable method.

An enthusiastic student of antiquity, the now celebrated Schliemann, was deeply influenced, a half century ago, by the hypothesis that the story of the Trojan war, as told in the "Iliad," had a substantial basis in historical fact. This hypothesis was not new; but just at that time it was in disfavor when judged in the light of the prevailing opinions of the classical historians. Schliemann gave to this hypothesis a new vividness; for he was an imaginative man. But in making the hypothesis vivid, he made it more and more improbable by adding to it the further hypothesis that the ancient tradition as to the site of Troy was also historically well founded. Having formed his hypothesis, he reasoned in a way that, for our momentary purpose, we may roughly sum-

marize thus: "If the Homeric story of the Trojan war was historically well founded, and if the ancient traditions about the site of the real Troy were also true, and if nothing has since occurred to render unrecognizable the ruins which were left when Troy was burned, — then, in case I dig in just that mound, yonder, I shall find the ruins of a large city, which once contained palaces and treasures, and which will show signs of having been burned."

Now this hypothesis of Schliemann about Troy was, when he formed or reformed his conjectures upon the topic, a seemingly very unlikely hypothesis. But Schliemann dug, and the now well-known ruins came to light.

Hereupon you will all agree that, from the facts of experience which were thus presented for further judgment, no important conclusion could be said to follow deductively and as a necessary condition. And as a fact Schliemann is known to have overestimated both the probability and the importance of the conclusions which he himself drew from

his discoveries. Later research corrected his conclusions in many respects. But all of us will agree that in one respect Schliemann's success when his excavations were made very greatly changed the probability of his own assertion that the Homeric story of the Trojan war had some basis in historical facts. What he said was: "If this old story is true, and if I dig in yonder mound, such and such things will come to light." The success of his excavations, the fact that such things as he had predicted actually came to light when he dug, — all this did not demonstrate, but did make probable, the assertion: "This old story has a real basis in historical truth." The very fact that, before the excavation was tried, Schliemann's hypothesis about the truth of the old story of the sack of Troy seemed improbable, and that his expectations of success in digging for the ruins appeared extravagant and unwarranted, — this very fact made his actual success all the more significant. Common sense at once commented: What could lead to such an

antecedently unlikely success as that of Schliemann, unless the idea which guided Schliemann's excavations had some basis in fact? Nothing was demonstrated by Schliemann's first discoveries. But a new probability had henceforth to be assigned to the hypothesis which had led to Schliemann's predictions and discoveries, — namely, that some historical foundation existed for the story of the Trojan war.

VII

Schliemann's triumph, such as it was, is familiar. It furnishes a typical instance of the second of the two leading processes of inductive reasoning. This second method is that of hypothesis and test. Suppose that we make some hypothesis A. Hereupon suppose that we are able to reason, in advance of further experience, that if A is true, some fact, let us say E, will be observed, in case we meet certain conditions of observation or of experiment. Then, the more unlikely it is, in the light of previous knowledge, that the

fact E should be observable under the mentioned conditions, the more does our actual success in finding the fact of experience, E, at the place and time where the hypothesis had led us to look for it, render probable the assertion that there is at least some measure of truth about the hypothesis A.

The method used by the insurance companies, when they apply facts which are summarized in the mortality tables as a guide for future insurance transactions, depends upon reasoning from experiences which we have already collected, to the probability of assertions about facts which are as yet unobserved. The other method of induction, — the method which, in his own way, Schliemann exemplified, follows an order which is, in part, the reverse of the order of the reasoning process which the insurance companies emphasize. This second method of induction consists in first inventing some hypothesis A, which is adapted to the purpose of the investigator. Then the user of this method discovers, usually by some pro-

cess of deductive reasoning, that, if the hypothesis A is true, some determinate fact of experience E will be found under certain conditions. The investigator hereupon looks for this predicted fact E. If he fails to find it, his hypothesis is refuted, and he must look for another. But if he finds E where his hypothesis had bidden him to look for E, then the hypothesis A begins to be rendered probable. And the more frequently A is verified, and the more unexpected and antecedently improbable are these verifications, the more probable does the hypothesis A become.

The most important and exact results of the inductive sciences are reached by methods in which the verification of hypotheses plays a very large part. Galileo used hypotheses, computed what the results would be in case the hypotheses were true, and then by further experience verified the hypotheses. So did Newton; so in a very different age, and in a very different field, did Darwin. Upon the process of inventing hypotheses, of com-

puting their consequences, and of then appealing to experience to confirm or refute the hypotheses, the greatest single advances in physical science rest.

And the principle used in this branch of induction may be stated thus: —

When without any antecedent knowledge that the consequences of a given hypothesis are true, we find, upon a fair examination of the facts, that these consequences are unexpectedly verified, then the hypothesis in question becomes, not certainly true, but more and more probable.

VIII

These general remarks about the inductive methods used in science may seem to some of you to be mere commonplaces. But they have been needed to bring us to the point where Charles Peirce's remark about the significance of the actual successes of scientific method can at length be appreciated.

If the only methods followed by the natural

sciences were the statistical methods of the insurance companies; if all the work of scientific induction were done, first by making collections of facts, such as mortality tables exemplify, and secondly by making probable predictions about the future based mainly upon the already observed facts, as the insurance companies issue new policies on the basis of the already existing tables, then indeed the work of the inductive sciences would be progressive, but it would not be nearly as creative as it actually is.

In fact, however, the inductive sciences owe their greatest advances to their greatest inventors of hypotheses, — to men such as Galileo or as Darwin. To be sure, when the inventors of scientific hypotheses are in question, these inventors must also be not only inventors, but also verifiers, and must be willing readily to abandon any hypothesis whose consequences conflict with experience. But since it is the actually successful, while far-reaching, hypothesis which adds the most new probabilities to science, the art of mak-

ing great advances, especially in the most exact branches of physical science, must especially depend upon the power to invent fitting hypotheses.

Now a very good hypothesis depends, in general, for its high value, first upon its novelty; secondly, upon the fact that, when duly tested, it is verified. If it is not novel, the verification of its consequences will make comparatively little difference to the science in question. If it cannot be verified, and especially if experience refutes it, it does not directly contribute to the progress of science. But the more novel an hypothesis is, the more in advance of verification must it appear improbable; and the greater are the risks which its inventor seems to run when he first proposes it.

IX

Now in what way shall a good inventor of hypotheses be guided to his invention? Shall he confine himself only to the hypotheses which, when first he proposes them, seem

antecedently probable? If he does this, he condemns himself to relative infertility. For the antecedently probable hypothesis is precisely the hypothesis which lacks any very notable novelty. Even if such an hypothesis bears the test of experience, it therefore adds little to knowledge. Worthless for the purposes of any more exact natural science until it has been duly verified, the hypothesis which is to win, in the advancement of science, a really great place, must often be, at the moment of its first invention, an apparently unlikely hypothesis, — a poetical creation, warranted as yet by none of the facts thus far known, and subject to all the risks which attend great human enterprises in any field. In such a position was Darwin's hypothesis regarding the origin of species through natural selection, when first he began to seek for its verification.

This, however, is not all. A highly significant scientific hypothesis must not only be a sort of poetic creation. There is another consideration to be borne in mind. The

number of possible new hypotheses, in any large field of scientific inquiry, is, like the number of possible new poems, often very great. The labor of testing each one of a number of such hypotheses, sufficiently to know whether the hypothesis tested is or is not probably true, is frequently long. And the poetic skill with which the hypotheses are invented, as well as their intrinsic beauty, gives, in advance of the test, no assurance that they will succeed in agreeing with experience. The makers of great scientific hypotheses, — the Galileos, the Darwins, — are, so to speak, poets whose inventions must be submitted to a very stern critic, namely, to the sort of experience which their sciences use. And no one can know in advance what this critic's verdict will be. Therefore, if it were left to mere chance to determine what hypotheses should be invented and tested, scientific progress would be very slow. For each new hypothesis would involve new risks, would require lengthy new tests, and would often fail.

As a fact, however, the progress of natural science, since Galileo began his work, and since the new inductive methods were first applied, has been (so Charles Peirce asserts) prodigiously faster than it could have been had mere chance guided the inventive processes of the greater scientific thinkers. In view of these facts, Charles Peirce reasons that the actual progress of science, from the sixteenth century until now, could not have been what it is, had not the human mind been, as he says, in some deep way attuned to the nature of things. The mind of man must be peculiarly fitted to invent new hypotheses such that, when tested by experience, they bear the test, and turn out to be probably true. The question hereupon arises, "To what is this aptness of the human mind for the invention of important and successful scientific hypotheses due?"

X

This question is not easy to answer. Were new hypotheses in science framed simply by

processes analogous to those which the insurance companies employ when they take new risks, the matter would be different. For the insurance companies adapt the existing tables of mortality to their new undertakings, or else obtain modified tables gradually, by a mere process of collection and arrangement. And all the statistical sciences make use of this method; and there is, of course, no doubt that this method of gradual advance, through patient collection of facts, is one of the two great sources of scientific progress.

But the other method, the method of inventing new hypotheses which go beyond all results thus far obtained, — the method which first proposes and then tests these hypotheses, — involves at every stage a venture into an unknown sea. Unless some deep-lying motive guides the inventor, he will go uselessly astray, and will waste his efforts upon inventions which prove to be failures.

In many branches of science such fortunes have in fact long barred the way. Consider, for instance, the fortunes of modern patho-

logical research, up to the present moment, in dealing with the problem furnished by the existence of cancer. The most patient devotion to details, the most skilful invention of hypotheses, has so far led only to defeat regarding some of the most central problems of the pathology of cancer. These problems may be solved at any moment in the near future. But up to this time it seems — according to what the leading pathologists tell us — as if the human mind had not been attuned to the invention of fitting hypotheses regarding the most fundamental problems of the "cancer-research."

How different, on the other hand, were the fortunes of mechanics from Galileo's time to that of Newton. What wonderful scientific inventiveness guided the early stages of electrical science. How rapidly some portions of pathological research have advanced. And, according to Charles Peirce, in all these most successful instances it is the happy instinct for inventing the hypotheses which has shortened a task that, if left to chance

and to patience, would have proved hopelessly slow. If science had advanced mainly by the successive testing of all the possible hypotheses in any given field, the cancer-research, in its period of tedious trials and errors, and not the physical science of Galileo, with its dramatic swiftness of progress, nor yet the revolutionary changes due to the influence of Darwin, would exemplify the ruling type of scientific research. But as a fact, the great scientific advances have been due to a wonderful skill in the art of Galileo, and of the other leading inventors of new scientific ideas.

The present existence, then, and the rapid progress of the inductive sciences, have been rendered possible by an instinctive aptitude of the human mind to shorten the labors of testing hypothesis through some sort of native skill in the invention of hypotheses such as are capable of bearing the test of experience.

XI

Now one cannot explain the existence of such an aptitude for inventing good hypotheses by pointing out that the processes of science are simply a further development of that gradual adaptation of man to his environment which has enabled our race to survive, and which has moulded us to our natural conformity to the order of nature. For the aptitude to invent scientific hypotheses is not like our power to find our way in the woods, or to get our food, or even to create and to perpetuate our ordinary social orders. Each new scientific hypothesis of high rank is a new creation which is no mere readapting of habits slowly acquired. The conditions which enable the creator of the hypothesis to invent it never existed before his time. Human beings could have continued to exist indefinitely had Galileo never appeared. Science gets what may be called its "survival value" only after its hypotheses have been invented and tested. Without science, the

race could have found its food, and been moulded to its environment, for indefinitely numerous future ages. Natural selection could never, by itself, have produced, through merely favoring the survival of skilful warriors or of industrious artisans, the genius which was so attuned to the whole nature of things as to invent the atomic hypothesis, or to discover spectrum-analysis, or to create electrical science. Our science invents hypotheses about phenomena which are, in appearance, utterly remote from our practical life. Only after a new science, such as that of electricity, has grown out of this mysterious attuning of man's creative powers to the whole nature of the physical universe, then, and only then, does this science prove, in its applications, to be useful.

We can therefore here sum up the matter by saying that the natural world has somehow created, in man, a being who is apt for the task of interpreting nature. Man's interpretation is halting and fallible; but it has shown itself, since Galileo's time, too

rapidly progressive in its invention of successful hypotheses to permit us to regard this aptitude as the work of chance. Man's gradual adjustment to his natural environment may well explain his skill as artisan, or as mere collector and arranger of natural facts, but cannot explain the origin of his power to invent, as often and as wonderfully as he has invented, scientific hypotheses about nature which bear the test of experience.

XII

If, then, you seek for a sign that the universe contains its own interpreter, let the very existence of the sciences, let the existence of the happy inventive power which has made their progress possible, furnish you such a sign. A being whom nature seems to have intended, in the first place, simply to be more crafty than the other animals, more skilful in war and in hunting, and in the arts of living in tribal unities, turns out to be so attuned to the whole of nature that,

when he once gets the idea of scientific research, his discoveries soon relate to physical matters as remote from his practical needs as is the chemical constitution of the nebulæ, or as is the origin and destiny of this earth, or as is the state of the natural universe countless ages ago in the past. In brief, man is not what he seems, a creature of a day, but is known to be an interpreter of nature. He is full of aptitudes to sound the depths of time and of space, and to invent hypotheses which it will take ages to verify, but which will, in a vast number of cases, be verified. Full of wonders is nature. But the most wonderful of all is man the interpreter, — a part and a member (if our philosophy is right) of the world's infinite Community of Interpretation.

The very existence of natural science, then, is an illustration of our thesis that the universe is endlessly engaged in the spiritual task of interpreting its own life.

XIII

The older forms of teleology, often used by the theologians of the past, frequently missed the place where the empirical illustrations of the workings of intelligence, in the universe, and where the signs of the life of the divine spirit are most to be sought. The teleology of the future will look for illustrations of the divine, and of design, neither in miracles nor in the workings of any continuously striving "will" or "vital impulse" which from moment to moment moulds things so as to meet present needs, or to guide present evolution.

Man, as we have seen, has an aptitude to invent hypotheses that, when once duly tested, throw light on things as remote in space as are the nebulæ, as distant in time as is the origin of our whole stellar system. This aptitude lies deep in human nature. Its existence is indeed no miraculous event of to-day. Man's power to interpret his world has somehow evolved with man. The whole natural world of the past has been needed to produce

man the interpreter. On the other hand, this power of man cannot have been the result of any "vital impulse" "canalizing" matter or otherwise blindly striving continuously and tentatively for light. For this scientific aptitude of man links him even now with the whole time-order. He is so attuned by nature that, imperfect as he now is, he is adapted to be or to become, in his own halting way, but not in totally blind fashion, an interpreter of the meaning of the whole of time. Now such a teleological process as this which man's scientific successes express, illustrates the teleology of a spiritual process which does not merely, from moment to moment, adapt itself to a preëxistent world. Nor does this process appear as merely one whereby an unconscious impulse squirms its way through the "canals" which it makes in matter. No, this teleology appears to illustrate a spiritual process which, in its wholeness, interprets at once the endless whole of time.[1]

[1] While I write these words, a colleague of mine, Professor L. J. Henderson, is publishing a book, entitled "The Fitness of the Envi-

XIV

I have spent most of our brief time, in our closing lecture, in illustrations of our meta-

ronment," wherein he points out that however we may interpret the facts, there exists, in the natural world, an instance of apparent adaptation which has never before been clearly apprehended and described. This instance, viewed by itself, furnishes no proof of our present philosophy, and no proof of any other philosophy; but it furnishes an illustration of the sort of evidence for teleology which, as I believe, the teleologically disposed philosophers of the future will ponder, and will interpret.

What Professor Henderson points out is that the physico-chemical constitution of the whole natural world, so far as that world is accessible to scientific study, is "preadapted," is "fitted" to be an environment for living beings. This "fitness" is of a nature which cannot have resulted from the processes whereby life has been evolved. The same fitness involves an union of many different physico-chemical properties of the environment of living beings, — an union so complicated that one cannot suppose it due to chance. And finally the origin of this fitness must have preceded by countless ages any physical event of which we now have any probable knowledge. If life itself ever had an origin, the physical world was thus, in a manner which is new to us, inexplicably preadapted to the coming life for an indefinitely vast period before the life appeared. If life had (as Arrhenius has supposed) no origin whatever, the fitness of the environment which is here in question, being due neither to life nor to chance, remains a problem requiring scientific study, but at present promising no scientific solution.

As Professor Henderson points out, the "fitness of the environment" which he has thus discovered is so vast and pervasive, and so incapable of explanation in "vitalistic" terms as to render all forms of vitalism (including that of Bergson) superfluous as explanations of the true mutual fitness of organism and environment. In a natural world which is once for all, as Professor Henderson points out,

physical doctrine. For it is needful to leave this doctrine in your minds as one which calls attention to an essentially new aspect of philosophical idealism, as well as to a doctrine of Life.

Time, Interpretation, and the Community, and finally, The World as a Community, — these have been the central ideas of the metaphysical portion of our course. We have everywhere pointed out, as we went, the connection between these ideas and the ethical and religious interests which we have also expounded and defended. Our last words of

"biocentric," why seek any longer after special vitalistic explanations for special instances of adaptation?

My own view of the relation of Professor Henderson's discovery to the sort of philosophy which these lectures have defended, is that here we have just that sort of preadaptation of earlier stages of the time-process to later stages which of course does not prove, but does illustrate, our own view of the time-process. Professor Henderson's "fitness of the environment" is analogous to Charles Peirce's "attuning" of the human mind to the universe which our sciences progressively interpret. Whatever else life is, it contains the natural conditions for an interpretation of the world. What Professor Henderson's facts, and Charles Peirce's facts, do not prove, but illustrate, is our philosophical thesis that the time-world viewed as a whole, or in very long stretches, is a process which possesses, and includes, not mere miracles and efforts and vital impulses, but a total meaning and a coherent interpretation.

all must relate to the practical consequences which follow for us, and for our present age, if our view of the historical mission of Christianity is true, and if the form of idealism, which we have here expounded, rightly states the relation of the Christian ideas to the real world. Let me sum up these practical consequences as briefly as I can. In sum, they amount to two maxims.

In the past, the teaching of Christian doctrine has generally depended upon some form of Christology. In recent times the traditional problems of Christology have become, in the light of our whole view of the world, of mankind, and of history, increasingly difficult and perplexing. Whoever asserts that, at one moment of human history, and only at that one moment, an unique being, at once an individual man, and at the same time also God, appeared, and performed the work which saved mankind, — whoever, I say, asserts this traditional thesis, involves himself in historical, in metaphysical, in technically theological, and in elementally

religious problems, which all advances in our modern sciences and in our humanities, in our spiritual life and in our breadth of outlook upon the universe, have only made, for the followers of tradition, constantly harder to face and to solve. The first of our practical maxims is: *Simplify your traditional Christology, in order thereby to enrich its spirit. The religion of loyalty has shown us the way to this end.*

Henceforth our religion must more and more learn to look upon the natural world as infinite both in space and in time, and upon the salvation of man as something bound up with the interpretation of an infinitely rich realm of spiritual life, — a realm whose character the legends of early Christian tradition did not portray with literal truth. Therefore, if religious insight is indeed to advance, and if the spirit of Christianity is to keep in touch with the growing knowledge of mankind, *the Christology of the future cannot permanently retain the traditional forms which have heretofore dominated the history both of dogma, and of the visible Christian church.*

And yet, if our previous account of the Christian ideas has been sound, the Christology of the past has been due to motives which are perfectly verifiable in human religious experience, and which can be interpreted in terms of a rationally defensible philosophy both of life and of the universe. As a fact, whatever Christology Paul, or any later leader of Christian faith, has taught, and whatever religious experience has been used by the historical church, or by any of its sects or of its visible forms, as giving warrant for the Christological opinions, *the literal and historical fact has always been this, that in some fashion and degree those who have thus believed in the being whom they called Christ, were united in a community of the faithful, were in love with that community, were hopefully and practically devoted to the cause of the still invisible, but perfectly real and divine Universal Community, and were saved by the faith and by the life which they thus expressed.*

Now in general, whatever else they held

to be true, all the communities of Christian believers have viewed their Christ as the being whose life was a present fact in their community, inspiring its doings, uniting its members, and pointing beyond the little company of the present believers to the ideal communion of all the saints, and to the triumph of the Spirit.

Now if my account of the matter is well founded, the fact that believers have expressed their views about Christ in terms which involved symbols, legends, doubtful dogmas, and endlessly perplexing theological problems need not obscure from us any longer a truth which is verifiable, is literal, and is saving. This is the one truth which has always been grasped, in a concrete and practical form, whenever the religion of loyalty has found on earth its own. *The name of Christ has always been, for the Christian believers, the symbol for the Spirit in whom the faithful — that is to say the loyal — always are and have been one.*

Now the first practical result of recogniz-

ing that in this faith lies the genuine meaning which has lain beneath all the various and perplexing Christologies of the past is, otherwise, expressed thus: It is unwise to try to express this genuinely catholic faith of all the loyal by attempting to form one more new sect. I do not wish to see any such new sect, or to hear of one. It is needless to expect that those whom tradition now satisfies will at present first abandon tradition in order to learn the truth which, in their heart of hearts, they know that tradition has always symbolized. If men are loyal, but are in doubt as to traditional theology, it is a waste of time to endeavor to prove the usual theses of dogmatic Christology by any collection of accessible historical evidences. Such historical evidences are once for all insufficient. The existing documents are too fragmentary. The historical hypotheses are too shifting and evanescent. And if it is faith that is to be, in Christological matters, the real substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen, what faith has ever been more Chris-

tian in spirit, more human in its verifiability, more universal, more saving, more concrete, than the faith of the Pauline churches? Our practical maxim is: *Hold fast by that faith.*

What is practically necessary is therefore this: Let your Christology be the practical acknowledgment of the Spirit of the Universal and Beloved Community. This is the sufficient and practical faith. Love this faith, use this faith, teach this faith, preach this faith, in whatever words, through whatever symbols, by means of whatever forms of creeds, in accordance with whatever practices best you find to enable you with a sincere intent and a whole heart to symbolize and to realize the presence of the Spirit in the Community. All else about your religion is the accident of your special race or nation or form of worship or training or accidental personal opinion, or devout private mystical experience, — illuminating but capricious. The core, the center of the faith, is not the person of the individual founder, and is not any other individual man. Nor is this core to

be found in the sayings of the founder, nor yet in the traditions of Christology. The core of the faith is the Spirit, the Beloved Community, the work of grace, the atoning deed, and the saving power of the loyal life. There is nothing else under heaven whereby men have been saved or can be saved. To say this is to found no new faith, but to send you to the heart of all true faith.

This is no vague humanitarianism, is no worship of the mere natural being called humanity, and is no private mystic experience. This is a creed at once human, divine, and practical, and religious, and universal. Assimilate and apply this creed, and you have grasped the principle of Christian institutional life in the past, and the principle which will develop countless new religious institutions in the future, *and which will survive them.*

The first of my practical concluding maxims may be stated thus: Interpret Christianity and all the problems of its Christology in this spirit, and you will aid towards the one crowning office of all human religion. You

will win membership in the one invisible church.

My second maxim is this: *Look forward to the human and visible triumph of no form of the Christian church.* Still less look to any sect, new or old, as the conqueror. Henceforth view the religious ideal as one which, in the future, is to be won, if at all, by methods distinctively analogous to the methods which now prevail in the sciences of nature. It is not my thought that natural science can ever displace religion or do its work. But what I mean is that since the office of religion is to aim towards the creation on earth of the Beloved Community, the future task of religion is the task of inventing and applying the arts which shall win men over to unity, and which shall overcome their original hatefulness by the gracious love, not of mere individuals, but of communities. Now such arts are still to be discovered. Judge every social device, every proposed reform, every national and every local enterprise by the one test: *Does this help towards the coming of the uni-*

versal community. If you have a church, judge your own church by this standard; and if your church does not yet fully meet this standard, aid towards reforming your church accordingly. If, like myself, you hold the true church to be invisible, require all whom you can influence to help to render it visible. To do that, however, does not mean that you shall either conform to the church as it is, or found new sects. If the spirit of scientific investigation, or of learned research, shows signs — as it already does — of becoming one of the best of all forms of unifying mankind in free loyalty, then regard science not merely as in possible harmony with religion, but as itself already one of the principal organs of religion. Aid toward the coming of the universal community by helping to make the work of religion not only as catholic as is already the true spirit of loyalty, but as inventive of new social arts, as progressive as is now natural science. So shall you help in making, not merely happy individuals (for no power can render detached individuals

permanently happy, or save them from death or from woe). You shall aid towards the unity of spirit of those who shall be at once free and loyal.

We can look forward, then, to no final form, either of Christianity or of any other special religion. But we can look forward to a time when the work and the insight of religion can become as progressive as is now the work of science.

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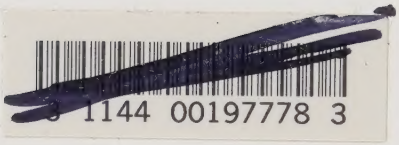
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